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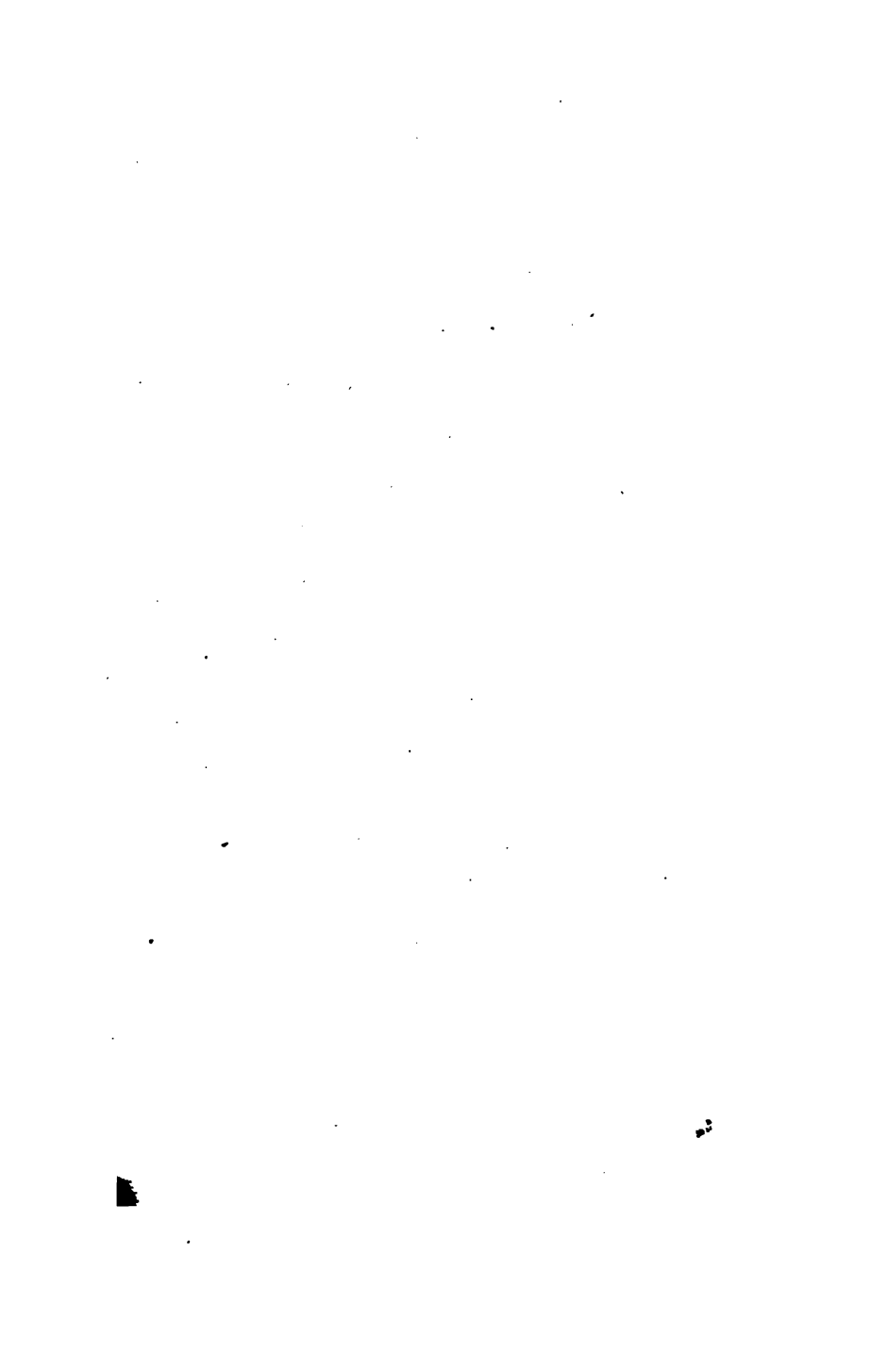
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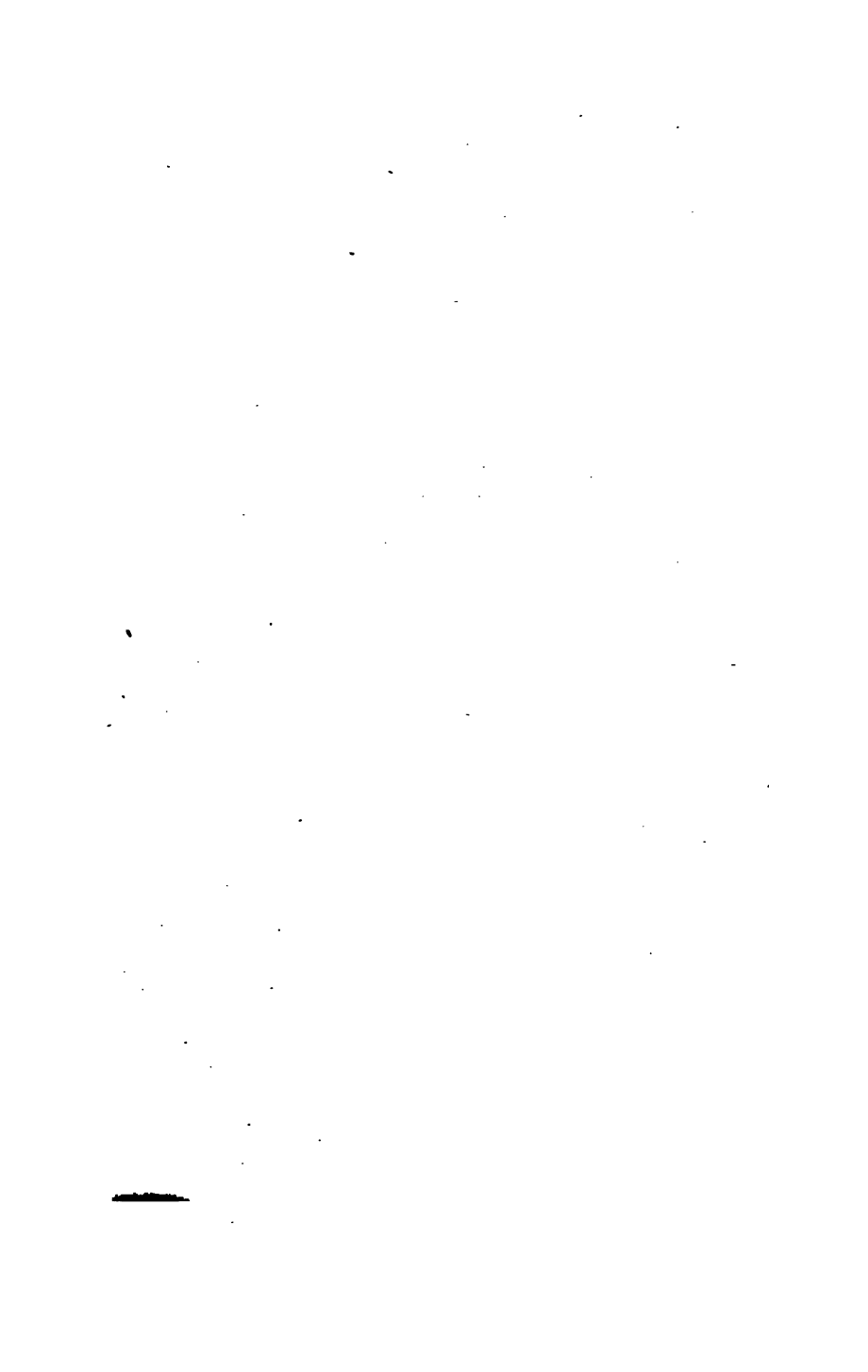


O L I V I A;

OR,

DESERTED BRIDE.

VOL III.



O L I V I A;

OR,

DESERTED BRIDE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
HORTENSIA,
THE RAMBLES OF FRANKLIN,
AND
THE FASHIONABLE FRIEND.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

V O L. III.



L O N D O N :

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



O L I V I A;
O R,
D E S E R T E D B R I D E.

C H A P. L I V.

Some Resolutions that were formed at Vane-Grove.

WHEN Mr., and Mrs. Vane left Bath, they were accompanied to the Grove by Sir Robert and Lady Clifton, who spent three months with them in their delightful retreat. Sir Robert was so pleased with the country, that he purchased some land, and instantly set about building a house near Mr. Vane's. Lady

VOL. III. B Clifton

Clifton was delighted with the proposal; for she found herself so much attached to Olivia, that the idea of a separation from her now was considered as insupportable. Mr. and Mrs. Vane were equally rejoiced at the prospect of having them, a part of every year, in their neighbourhood; and before they left the Grove, the workmen had made so rapid a progress in their building, as gave them hopes that it would be fit for their reception, the following Spring, when they purposed returning to take possession of their house, and passing the pleasantest Summer-months with their friends. Before Lady Clifton left the Grove Miss Goldwyn arrived there: Mr. and Mrs. Vane had repeatedly solicited Mr. Goldwyn to spare them one of his daughters. Emily was the favourite of Olivia, and therefore Mr. Goldwyn thought her company would be most acceptable. She was a lively and agreeable girl, extremely fond of Olivia; and, at the time of her arrival at the Grove,

Grove, about seventeen years of age. Her person was genteel, her face of that interesting kind, that it was impossible to look at her without being pleased; and therefore, though she was not a regular beauty, she was already much admired. Her young heart was delighted with the thought of becoming an inhabitant of Vane-Grove, and her cheerfulness added to the pleasure of the happy party.

Lady Clifton was once more obliged to be separated from Mrs. Vane;—they had staid much beyond the time they had at first proposed; but business of the utmost importance now required Sir Robert's presence in town. The two ladies agreed to keep up a regular correspondence, and to inform each other of every circumstance that should occur during the painful hours of absence. The gentlemen were equally attached to each other in the bands of friendship, and therefore they looked forwards, with satisfaction, to the period in which they should become

such near neighbours.—As the correspondence which took place between the different friends will convey a more interesting continuation of the history than a narrative of the events that followed, we think it would not be doing justice to the parties not to insert the letters, which contained the genuine sentiments of the hearts from which they were dictated.

CHAP.

L E T T E R X V .

MRS. VANE TO LADY CLIFTON.

N O, my Eliza, I pretend not to disown that I can think of Lord Davenport's sorrows without feeling compassion, or reflect on my being the unhappy cause without regret. But why did you require me to speak my sentiments on this ungrateful subject? a subject I wish ever to avoid. I lament his ill-fated constancy, whilst I cannot help blaming him for continuing to think so much of one who has long been, like himself, the right of another; 'tis not only weak but blameable: though I no longer cherish the least partiality for Lord Davenport, yet I think him entitled to the same pity I should feel for any one that I knew was

unhappy—more, thank Heaven, is not mine to give. Long, very long, has the weak heart that once spoke, though silently, yet too powerfully, in his favour, rested secure in the bosom of its lawful owner—but no more of Davenport—let us talk only of Mr. Vane, the dear, the deserving object, that justly claims my tenderest affection.

I have informed Mr. Vane of the accidental meeting at Bath; but no longer does he labour under the burthen of suspicion. I believe, was he to see me with Lord Davenport, his mind would be at peace: such, I flatter myself, is the confidence that time hath taught him to place in your happy friend. We frequently recur to the scenes of our youthful pleasures. More than once has he told me that Davenport held the first place in his esteem, till I robbed him of his heart: but that the moment he discovered him to be his rival, terminated his friendship.

Shall

Shall I then presume to condemn a conduct which, if it has been wrong in some instances, originated from a passion of which I was myself the cause? I am afraid, the unbounded, the flattering indulgence I now meet with, will, unless I keep the most watchful guard over my actions, rob me of that humility which is particularly my duty to preserve!

My sweet, lively Emily Goldwyn has obtained our dear father's consent to continue at the Grove so long as Mr. Vane and myself shall desire her company: therefore, I presume, you will conclude it is not likely we shall very soon be parted. I exult in the delightful opportunity that is given me, of repaying to this dear sister of my heart a small portion of that mighty debt which I owe to her excellent and respectable parents, who so tenderly watched and guarded me in my youthful days, and kept me a stranger to every care: but more than for every other blessing,

sing, I ought to thank them for the virtuous principles which they so carefully implanted in my soul. Every good I possess I owe to their benevolence; every sorrow I have experienced, to my own deviation from their precepts.

I begin to fear that my Emily, lively as she appears, is not happy. I doubt she has already been taught a lesson that I learned too soon. Unfortunate girl! she has confessed that she already is deprived of that indifference which, for some years, I hoped she would have possessed. Her father suspected her attachment, and it made him the more ready to intrust her to my care. A young officer, who has for many months been quartered in their neighbourhood, is the object of her regard;—she has promised, however, to receive no letters, nor to let the most flattering persuasions prevail upon her to take any step without the knowledge of her friends.—Would that
I could.

I could as easily persuade her to break off a connection that wears so unpromising an aspect!—Poor Emily! I fear she has rashly ventured to intrust her inexperienced heart in the keeping of one who will never know its inestimable value; however, I will not cherish any prejudice against this young hero, till I have an opportunity of judging for myself, after having seen and conversed with him; for she says, she is sure he will not be long absent from Vane-Grove.

Next week there is to be an assembly at D——: we have promised Emily to accompany her; perhaps the lover may be there likewise—I am impatient to see him. Should he be good and amiable, Mr. Vane has assured me, that want of fortune on either side shall not be an obstacle to their union. If his character will not stand the test, I will do all I can to convince Emily how great a risk she would run, by venturing to intrust her

happiness with a soldier, and a stranger.—
No more of this dear girl; as yet I am
too much interested in her happiness to
be able at this moment to write on any
other subject, therefore I will bid you
adieu.

OLIVIA VANE.

LETTER

L E T T E R XVI.

MISS GOLDWYN TO MISS CRESWELL.

YES, my dear Bertha, I have followed your prudent advice, and ventured to entrust Mrs. Vane, that dearest and kindest of friends, with the imprudence I have been guilty of, in daring to form an attachment which the best of parents, I fear, will ever continue to disapprove. I wish I could recal the moments that are fled: I lament the weakness which still predominates over the admonitions of reason. Mr. Middleton may be unworthy my affection, and, like too many of his sex, conceal beneath the most interesting appearance, not only all the vices, but the inconstancy for which the gentlemen of the army are almost become a

proverb ;—yet I never suspect him without meeting a thousand secret reproofs from my own heart for its injustice. I forbade his writing to me when I left ****. He has obeyed my commands—and, forgive my inexcusable, my unpardonable folly, I am displeas'd that he has done so ! Perhaps he has left **** : if so, I shall see him no more ! Methinks I could better support a final separation than I could the being convinc'd of his unworthiness or inconstancy ; a certainty of which would be followed by such a torrent of self-reproaches as I should be unable to combat with any degree of fortitude.—My father has written me several most affectionate letters ; but the name of Middleton has not been mentioned. The tenderness of my father's nature will not permit him to wound me with a single reprehension ; but the silence he has so strictly observ'd on the subject in which he knows my heart is most interest'd, is a convincing testimony that he still continues

ues to think my lover undeserving the hand and heart of his daughter.—Teach me then, my Bertha, to recal that weak heart that has deserted your once happy Emily, and fled for shelter to a soldier's bosom.

You enquire if Mr. and Mrs. Vane are happy? Indeed they are: I never saw so delightful a couple. Our dear Olivia is the model from which our sex should endeavour to copy—all the virtues she has made her own; and by her sweet manner of displaying them, they have acquired a thousand additional charms. Mr. Vane looks up to her as a being of superior order, when compared with the rest of her sex; and the continual proofs which he gives her of his increasing tenderness, have rendered him inexpressibly dear to her. If ever it is my lot to become a wife, may I be as happy as Olivia!—but never, never, I fear, shall I be deserving of such envied felicity as she enjoys.

EMILY GOLDWYN.

LETTER

L E T T E R XVII.

MRS. VANE TO LADY CLIFTON.

I Have often heard of people's feeling an immediate attachment to a stranger, which has instantly arisen from something in their appearance which has taken such possession of their heart, that it has been in vain they have endeavoured to shake it off. Such sudden partialities are not justifiable; yet we often yield to, rather than contend their influence. This has been the case with me: I have seen Emily's admirer, and no longer condemn her for loving him; yet cannot pretend to deny but that I am blameable for being so prejudiced in favour of a youth of whom I know so little.

Emily accompanied Mr. Vane and myself

self to an assembly at D***, a little market-town, about four miles from the Grove : as the neighbourhood is extensive, I was not surpris'd at finding the room nearly filled when we arriv'd. We seated ourselves, and the minuets very soon began. I observ'd that Emily's eyes were constantly fix'd upon the door ; and I concluded that she expected her lover would have been there. She was very soon taken out to dance a minuet by a friend of Mr. Vane's. Whilst she was dancing I was struck by the appearance of the most elegant figure I ever beheld : tall, genteel, and graceful, with a countenance the most captivating and expressive I had ever seen ; he was dress'd in a suit of plain regimentals ; and looking eagerly around the room, as if he wanted to discover some friend, soon caught a view of my Emily as her partner was reconducting her to her seat. I look'd at the dear, trembling girl ; and her sparkling eyes inform'd me that they had beheld the conqueror of her heart.

He

He very soon approached us ; and after paying his respects to his fair mistress, and eagerly felicitating the honour of her hand for the evening, he intreated Miss Goldwyn to introduce him to her friends. She softly whispered Mr. Middleton's request, who very gracefully paid me his compliments, but with a kind of apprehensive diffidence that interested me greatly in his favour. After conversing with him some time, I found it impossible not to be pleased with him.

I beckoned Mr. Vane, informed him of Mr. Middleton's being there, and of his desire to be known to him. He then paid his respects to Mr. Vane, and was, to use a drawing-room phrase, most graciously received ; and the two gentlemen, to my great satisfaction, appeared much pleased with each other. It was justifying the partiality which I felt myself so wondrously inclined to indulge.

Emily informed me of her lover's having requested to be her partner, and enquired

quired if I would consent to her dancing with him? As I had never received any hints from Mr. Goldwyn on this subject, I did not look upon myself as authorised to prevent the innocent pleasure of the evening, by prohibiting their dancing together; and therefore gave my willing consent. Never did I see a more striking and interesting couple. They attracted the general attention of the company.—The happiness which had found its way to the heart of my Emily was visible in her animated countenance: nor was that of her partner less perceptible. If I am not mistaken, he lost not the moments which our indulgence afforded him; and whilst he endeavoured to enslave his fair captive, he found his own fetters increased.

When he handed Emily to our coach, Mr. Vane invited him to breakfast at the Grove the next morning; which invitation, you may suppose, was not refused. Emily was silent; but her blushes spoke her thanks more eloquently than language could

could have done: we saw her confusion, and carefully avoided a subject which we knew would only serve to increase it.—In my next I will send you an account of what passed during this interesting visit.

Ever your's,

OLIVIA VANE.

LETTER

L E T T E R XVIII.

LADY CLIFTON TO MRS. VANE.

I Thank you, my fair friend, for your entertaining account of our Emily, who, I find, is in a fair way of becoming a wife.—I am much pleased with the portrait of her lover; and hope none of the colours will appear flattering by a more intimate inspection of them.

That the gentlemen of the army are by most parents beheld with terror, I do not wonder; for too often the gaiety or depravity of their conduct justifies the coldness with which they are treated in many of the towns where they are quartered. But to condemn the whole, because many of them are guilty, would not only be illiberal, but unjust. — I believe,
for

for my own part, there is an equal, if not a larger portion of honour and integrity to be found amongst the military than with any other set of people in the world; and we have a right to expect it should be so, as many of them belong to the first families in the kingdom, and very few but have had a liberal education.

I hope your favourite will not disappoint your high-raised expectations of his worth. I am not one of those that condemn the sudden predilection that many are apt to feel for a stranger; which, though it often terminates in a disappointment of their hopes, springs from so generous an impulse of the mind as ought not to be discouraged. If, as in the instance before us, we meet with one whose manners, sentiments, and behaviour, are such as cannot fail to captivate and please, what right have we to conclude or suspect, that the heart which is concealed by those flattering externals should not have a higher claim to our attention?

You.

You enquired of me, why I mentioned Lord Davenport? — I had a desire of knowing how you would be able to bear a further account of his sufferings, before I ventured to impart them. You had previously convinced me, that I had no reason to suspect you of retaining any improper sentiments in that gentleman's favour; and I wished not to wound your heart, by a further detail of misfortunes that justly claim a tear from the eye of pity, till I thought necessity obliged me to send you the recital, lest you should hear of it at a time when your compassion might appear not only weak, but perhaps improper.

Lord Davenport has been some weeks a widower. — His lady died in childbed, at Montpellier, a few hours after she became a mother. She breathed her last sigh in the arms of her distracted husband, but not without pathetically recommending her infant daughter to his tenderest affection.

affection. Lord Davenport immediately left France; and the remains of his lady soon followed him to England, in order to be interred with her ancestors. Mr. Maynard is inconsolable; and it is not supposed he will long survive his only child, in whom he rested all his hopes of happiness.

Lord Davenport, who has nothing to reproach himself with on this occasion, having been a kind and indulgent husband, was extremely shocked at the sudden and unexpected death of his lady. Yet, as she never was the choice of his heart, on that account it is not likely that his grief will be attended with any dangerous consequences. To that, however, is imputed the melancholy which he resolutely indulges. He shuts himself from the world, admits no company, and is seldom heard to speak, except when the little Olivia is brought to him. The sound of that name, like the voice of enchantment,

chantment, generally operates upon his feelings, and a momentary cheerfulness animates his features. Many people have been to call upon him; very few, at present, have been admitted. His friends are all employed in using every endeavour to draw him from his present seclusion; and I hope they will succeed.

I hear our building goes on rapidly; and I rejoice that it does; for I am impatient to become your neighbour. Sir Robert is happy that I no longer feel any unwillingness to spend a part of every year in the country. To you, my friend, he is indebted for my readiness to leave the great world. 'Tis you that have given me a relish for the retired scenes, which I not long since considered as nearly similar to being buried alive. You have taught me no longer to be an enemy to reflection; and have acquired the happy art of rendering the social hour so cheerful and pleasant, that it has gained the preference,

in

in my opinion, to any other way of spending my time. But tell not in the routes of Fashion, publish it not in the Pantheon; for, believe me, I carefully conceal from every one here, Sir Robert excepted, the unaccountable alteration which has taken place in my sentiments and taste.

Write to me immediately on the receipt of this. — If I thought you did not feel compassion for the captive, which you have so long held in the adamantine chains of a love scarcely to be paralleled in history, I should be angry with you: but if I thought I disturbed your happiness with my tale, I should be still more displeased with myself. However, I have such a firm dependance on your virtue and fortitude, that I have no reason to doubt your ever acting wisest, discreetest, and best.

Don't fail to send me the interesting continuance of our Emily's story. That she gives you the first place in her friendship,

ship, I am content; but I look upon myself to have a just claim to rank second in her list of friends. — Sir Robert joins with me in every good wish. — That each increasing year may witness your increasing happiness, is the prayer of

ELIZA CLIFTON.

L E T T E R. XIX.

MRS. VANE TO LADY CLIFTON.

YOUR melancholy tale has cost me some tears. So long as I have a heart to feel for the unfortunate, I shall not cease to regret the sorrows of Lord Davenport, and pray for his returning happiness: nor is Mr. Vane displeas'd with me for the compassion I express'd at reading your letter, which I put into his hands. He was particularly struck with his having nam'd his daughter after your friend, and a tear glistered in his eye. He return'd your letter, fondly embrac'd me, and sighing, exclaim'd, "Poor Davenport! I wonder not at your constancy; after loving Olivia, was it possible to find another worthy of succeeding her!"—

There

There are moments of rapture so entwined and intermixed with a kind of grateful sadness, that admit of no description. This was one of them; and my full heart was unable to express the various, the grateful sensations that possessed it. If you love me, Lady Clifton, write no more of Lord Davenport, or his Olivia. I shall be displeased if you deny my request.

For the future, I will not condemn, or endeavour to prevent, any favourable impression which I or any one else may be inclined to encourage for a stranger. Perhaps kindred - minds may be prevented from coming to a more perfect knowledge of each other's merits by such narrow and grovelling fears as very cautious and suspicious people may have been taught to cherish.

The more we see of this young officer, the more we are pleased with him. His education has been genteel, his manners are ensnaring, his conversation entertain-

ing, and his person captivating. He is the natural son of a gentleman, who has been many years resident in one of our West India islands. He says, that Middleton is not the name of his father; but that, when necessity obliged him to leave England, in hopes of meeting better fortune in a foreign land than he could find in his native kingdom, his mother had promised to call him by no other name than the fictitious one she had assumed; and was given to understand, by her seducer, that all her hopes of receiving any supplies from him depended on the strict performance of her promise.

His mother, he said, was the daughter of a physician, who was once considered as very eminent in his profession; but having too high a relish for genteel life, and living to the utmost of his income, he left his wife and daughter entirely unprovided for: That his mother had, very soon afterwards, the additional loss of her other parent to lament; and having no
relations

relations left who would offer her an asylum, she put herself an apprentice to a millener; and it was in that dangerous situation that chance had thrown her betrayer in her way.

He mentioned his mother with veneration: Said, she inherited a thousand virtues; that her life had, from the moment of her seduction, been one continued series of grief and repentance; and that she had, on being supplied with a small sum of money by her lover, on the eve of his departure, buried herself in the most profound retirement; nor could any persuasions, or even her extreme fondness for him, who seemed the only tie she had to bind her to life, ever prevail upon her to mix with the world.

His father had been faithful to his promise of sending her remittances; which, in a few years, an uninterrupted series of success enabled him to do very liberally. He had been educated according to his directions; and a commission was purchased

chafed for him on the day he became seventeen : and that, from some letters which had lately arrived, he began to cherish hopes, that he should one day be permitted to embrace the author of his being, and perhaps be the means of doing justice to the best of mothers, who, if the continued practice of every virtue could be thought sufficient to atone for having once erred, he believed no one ever had a juster claim to perfection. She had received several advantageous proposals of marriage, but refused them all ; and determined never to marry, unless it was to the father of her darling son.

We were charmed with the fond enthusiasm with which Mr. Middleton mentioned his mother, and the warmth of affection that seemed to animate him when he attempted to describe her virtues. — His frankness, his manner, his undisssembled regard for our Emily, from whom he meets an equal return, all combine to make us his friends. Mr. Vane, who has
some

some knowledge of his commanding-officer, wrote to him, and begged he would, without reserve, acquaint him with what he knew respecting the conduct, disposition, and connections of young Middleton. Mr. Vane, in a few days, received an answer perfectly satisfactory. The gentleman mentioned Mr. Middleton as a most extraordinary young man, uncorrupted by the prevalence of bad example, unexceptionable in his conduct and morals, and possessed of such a sweetness of disposition as had rendered him dear to all his brother officers, and beloved by every one of his men; and he gave nearly the same account of his connections as we had before received from himself. We waited for no further testimony of his worth. I wrote immediately to Mr. Goldwyn, and requested he would return without delay with the messenger. He has been with us three days, and matters are in a most promising train. — Mr. Vane has declared his design to pre-

sent Mr. Middleton with a captain's commission on the day of his marriage with Emily, whose fortune is to be settled upon herself and children.—Mr. Goldwyn, after being acquainted with the discovery we had made of Mr. Middleton's amiable character, had no other objection but his situation; and that was soon obviated by a better knowledge of the lover, who begged of us, with the most grateful diffidence, to defer the generous intentions we had planned in his favour a few months; in which time, he flattered himself, the arrival of his father would perhaps enable him to fix on some other destination in life, that would be more pleasing to the parents of his adorable Emily, whose happiness would be equally dear to him as his own.

This ingenuous behaviour banished every doubt from the bosom of my dear Mr. Goldwyn, who promised from that moment to consider him as his son.—Emily's joy, though silent, wanted not the

the borrowed aid of language to be told. Never, I believe, was a happier set of mortals to be found on earth.—Mr. Middleton has written to inform his mother of the fortunate change of affairs: for he did not conceal his passion for my Emily from his indulgent parent, who did not attempt to prevent her son from endeavouring to obtain the object of his wishes. Her only request was, that he would defer the completion of them till his father arrived, whose sanction, she doubted not, would be easily obtained.

Emily, who has been so long harrassed with doubts and apprehensions of ever being happy, has even now a dread upon her spirits, lest the arrival of her lover's father should throw fresh difficulties in their path. I bade her impart her unnecessary doubts to the cause of them, who is the most likely person to put an end to such tormenting fears; and from her returning cheerfulness I believe he has succeeded.

Mr. Middleton is now chiefly at Vane-Grove; and we find him too agreeable an addition to our party to be willing to separate with him.

I flatter myself you will not think the story of these young lovers either tiresome or unentertaining; and therefore I shall not apologize for having made them the principal subject of this long epistle.

Yours,

OLIVIA VANE.

LETTER

L E T T E R X X .

L O R D D A V E N P O R T T O M R . B E E V O R .

MY friend, I thank you for your letter: it afforded the consolation it was kindly meant to convey:—to hear, that your lovely neighbour is happy, is the only source from which a single ray of pleasure, or a gleam of hope can find entrance to my gloomy and discontented soul; yet I cannot help sincerely lamenting the sudden, the unexpected death of Lady Davenport; and I often reproach myself for not having been able to give her more than a divided heart. Had she been endued with a larger portion of sensibility than nature had given her, I should be apprehensive that she was in

life dissatisfied with the companion that she so fondly called upon to save her from the stern approaches of death;—but her fond endearments in her last agonizing moments have relieved my desponding heart from that additional weight of misery. I am convinced, that every trial of affliction is light, when compared with that which is accompanied with self-reproaches.

I will endeavour to shake off this hopeless despair, which too long has rendered me unequal to perform the duties appointed me. No longer shall the world brand me with want of fortitude, or my private sorrows prevent my performance of all the social duties.—Am I not a father? And shall I not prove myself a good one? At this time old England calls for the exertion of all those whose situations entitle them to take an active part in public affairs. I will no longer be unemployed in the service of my country; and

and though for ever doomed to be wretched myself, as far as in my limited power, will endeavour to make others happy.

Let me hear frequently from you, Beevor. Your letters contain the only healing cordial that can abate the woes of Davenport. It is natural for you here to enquire what are already become of resolutions so lately formed : they shall remain unshaken. To love I am a martyr : in all besides, know, you shall find me a hero. Never more shall want of resolution entail its fruitless regrets on the heart which was once so easily led a victim to the gilded snares of avarice and pride.

Happy would be the peasant knew he the care and anxiety from which Heaven had removed him, by placing him in the shades of obscurity. Let not man ever wish to quit the humble walk, however far removed from the flattering snares of envied greatness, and all the weighty pomp of unsocial dignity. Guilt may endeavour

endeavour to find repose on the bed of down ; but conscience will draw its sable curtain. No science can teach infensibility ;—no bribe can buy off the pangs of difappointment.

DAVENPORT.

LET T E R

L E T T E R X X I .

MISS GOLDWYN TO MISS CRESWELL.

L E T none despair of happiness, however distant it may appear from their reach. You will smile, my Bertha, at the philosophy which the sudden, the unexpected change in my situation has produced, and perhaps enquire what became of it a few months since, when its aid would have been of so much service, and the practice of its precepts not only useful to myself, but entitled to praise? I am now too happy to answer such serious questions.

To Mrs. Vane I am chiefly indebted for the felicity I enjoy. Mr. Vane has acted

acted nobly.—My parents are reconciled. No longer love and duty are at variance with each other. The alteration these revolutions of affairs have effected in my lover would astonish you. No longer is his countenance marked with despondence, or his professions of love whispered with a voice of apprehension. He has absolutely forgotten to sigh, even in the presence of his mistress; and he has such a saucy look of contented cheerfulness, that I am sometimes obliged to remind him I may possibly change my opinion and discharge him: but the impertinent does not seem to fear my threats half so much as he did when he first became a volunteer in the service of Captain Cupid.

Mr. Middleton's father is soon expected in England. I am sometimes apprehensive that his coming may again make an alteration in the face of affairs. Mrs. Vane calls me a coward; and my lover is displeas'd if I venture to give the most distant

distant hint that perhaps the authority of his father may be exerted, to break off a connection that may be displeasing to him. He has more than once enquired what is become of that generous confidence which I at one time ran the hazard of placing in him, when so many bars appeared to impede our union, and now those difficulties were removed to torment myself with imaginary ones? I am, therefore, obliged to be silent: yet I wish this tremendous man was come.

Mrs. Middleton is in agonies at the thoughts of his arrival. She knows not at present whether she has reason to hope that he means to make any change in her situation; for young as he was when he left England, he had carefully avoided putting it in her power to have any other claims upon him than those which his own love and honour might one day prevail upon him to fulfil. Augustus indulges the most flattering hopes that his
amiable

amiable mother's sufferings will terminate on the arrival of his father, and her constancy and merit be rewarded with the hand and heart she has an undoubted right to call her own.

I tremble, my Bertha, when I reflect on the dangers to which our helpless sex are exposed, from the snares which are spread by the base and designing for unprotected innocence. What a noble, what a valuable heart, must Mrs. Middleton have possessed! and yet how severely has she suffered for the imprudence of one unguarded hour of unsuspecting confidence! I shall never be able to respect or love the father of Augustus, unless he will do justice to his amiable mother.

Mrs. Vane will not consent to my leaving the Grove till I become a wife. Her request of continuing with her is too agreeable not to be readily complied with; and when that important period arrives, I am authorised, by our dear Olivia,

via, to tell you, that your presence will not be dispensed with. Far distant as that time may be, I am almost terrified at the thoughts of the important change it will make in the situation of your Emily, who has ever been surrounded with tender and indulgent friends. Can I suppose that strangers will be inclined to think as favourably of me? and will not my Augustus, when time has perhaps rendered him less partial to the few good qualities I possess, condemn where he now approves? If far removed from my friends, I could not, methinks, support the least alteration in his sentiments. I know you will blame me for indulging disagreeable reflections in the presence of happiness, and for encouraging unpleasant presentiments, without having a single reason on which to build them. I cannot reflect on the trials which Mrs. Vane has met in the married life, without fear and trembling. True, there were many tracts
in

in her story very differently marked from any to be found in my own : but then her superior excellence, one would have imagined, must have secured her from every wound of suspicion.

I expect reproof, and am prepared to receive it with all due patience and humility.

We are going to spend this afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. Beevor : 'tis to be a family party ; and as we are all musical people, we are to have a little concert. Augustus is particularly fond of music ; and, if you choose to trust the decision of my judgment, plays most divinely. Mrs. Vane too excels in that delightful accomplishment, and is ever ready to perform, when called upon, to gratify and indulge her friends, by the exertion of her powers in this captivating science.

I have now only a few moments left for the important business of the toilet,
and

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and therefore must hasten to dress, that
I may be ready to obey the summons of
my friends.

Ever most cordially

And truly yours,

EMILY GOLDWYN.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXII.

MR. VANE TO SIR ROBERT CLIFTON.

MRS. Vane is now busily employed in writing an account to Lady Clifton of an event, which has lately happened to surprize us: to her letter I refer you for an explanation. Your building goes on with the utmost expedition; but the hurry and industry of the workmen, whom I endeavour to bribe into my service, does not, in any degree, answer the eagerness of my impatience to have you become my neighbour—I wish you to be near me: I want to borrow the aid of your philosophy, to enable me to support some disagreeable conflicts which I have to contend with in my own mind. I cannot pretend to deny that Heaven
has

has thrown in my way every ingredient that can constitute the happiness, and soften the cares of man ; but at the very moment I make the grateful acknowledgment, I do not feel myself happy. I have a thousand apprehensions that Mrs. Vane too often recollects the injustice of my conduct towards her, when she suffered from my mistaken resentment ; and I envy the miseries of Davenport, who has so severely atoned, by a multitude of sorrows, the sacrifice he made of love to duty. Mrs. Vane does not suspect that, although I could forgive, and clasp my rival to my bosom, I still want the consolation of being reconciled to myself. She is the best, the most perfect of women ; yet I am sometimes ready to find fault with her, because I can discover no failing that will bring her more upon a level with her erring husband. This conflict with myself, and disgust with the blessings I enjoy, makes good the assertion of a favourite author, That people
often

often grew weary of being happy, or enjoyed health till they began to think there must be something pleasant in being sick.—Wait not the tedious time set apart for the completion of your house; but come and make Vane-Grove your residence till it is finished. On you I rest my hopes of being cured of the unaccountable languor which has lately taken possession of my mind, and reduced me to a most degrading degree of humility in my own opinion. Come then, Clifton, and drive, by your cheerful society, the foul fiend, called Discontent, from the bottom of

HENRY VANE.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXIII.

MRS. VANE TO LADY CLIFTON.

MORE wonders, my Eliza, have arisen to mark my eventful life with singularity. Providence has, perhaps, for some wise and unknown purpose, chosen me from the number of the undistinguished many, to evince the power of its omnipotence, in enabling the weakest of frail mortals to support the trying finger of adversity; and then, by reversing its decrees, means to try her further, by showering upon her the more dangerous revolution of unbounded prosperity. Pray for me, that my head may not become giddy by looking down from the eminence to which I am raised, and that I may never forget I was once the humble, unnoticed Olivia.

VOL. III.

D

Elford,

Elford, who was indebted to the good Mr. Goldwyn for protection, when no one else was found to guard me from the dangers and oppressions which unhappy orphans too often experience.

A few evenings since, as Emily, Mr. Vane, and myself were sitting round our social fire-side, talking over some little occurrences that the departed day had given rise to, a servant entered, and informed me that a gentleman desired to speak with me; and very soon a handsome and well-drest stranger made his appearance. Immediately on his entrance he earnestly fixed his eyes upon my face, and with eager emotion exclaimed, —“ Yes, 'tis she; 'tis the daughter of my beloved Olivia, my ever to be lamented sister :” — and the next moment I found myself encircled in his arms. My pleasure, my surprise, was inexpressible. I had heard that my mother had a brother; but as many revolving years had elapsed, without my being able to learn any tidings of him, I
con-

concluded that the ruthless hand of Death had deprived me of my only relation. When we came a little to ourselves, and were able to enter into conversation with some degree of composure, he proceeded to inform us, that at his being sent abroad a needy and reluctant adventurer, to carve his own fortune, he, like a thousand others that were driven into exile by the rude hand of Necessity, experienced innumerable hardships; but knowing he had only himself and his own resolution to depend upon, he resolutely determined to combat the utmost rigour of fortune with patience and perseverance. For a long time he was unsuccessful in whatever he undertook. At length the wheel turned in his favour, and prosperity attended his footsteps.

No account of my parents' death reached him till three years after their decease, nor till then did he know what was become of them; and, by the same channel, he was informed they had left a daughter, who

was under the protecting care of a Mr. Goldwyn, and as happily provided for as she could have been had her parents been living. This it was that had prevented him from making enquiries after me at the time he had been informed of the loss I had sustained in those dear relations; and had determined him not to make himself or his intentions in my favour known, till he returned to England, which a long train of troublesome and unlooked-for circumstances, in respect to the settling his affairs, had for some years prevented. He thanked God he was not come a needy beggar, nor so rich as to forget those who had shared with him in his adversity. He shook Mr. Vane cordially by the hand, and told him, that his generosity in wedding his unportioned niece should not go unrewarded; bade him say not a word of not wanting an addition to his prosperity (which he was eagerly going to inform me of) for that a part of what he had saved was the just right of his sister's child, whose gene-
ROUS

rous and noble-souled father had saved his sinking family from ruin, when they were overwhelmed by a torrent of distresses ; who employed his little portion of fortune to protect the grey hairs of his aged parent from want, and took his Olivia, his lovely sister, a beggar to his arms, and even spared a part to him likewise. He was not able to go through this affecting narrative of past scenes unmoved—Nor did he weep alone.

I cannot describe the sensations I experienced at finding so near a relation restored to me, whom I had seldom heard mentioned but as one that had been long dead, or in a state not to return. Indeed I had never been with any one that remembered much more of him than the misfortunes that had occasioned his leaving England before my mother's marriage ; and I was too young to recollect any thing that my parents might have said about him before their death. I looked up to him with respect, and felt

as if Providence had restored me a long-lost parent.

He told us that he had been at Mr. Goldwyn's; by him was informed of my marriage, and directed to Vane-Grove. He further added, that he should stay with us no longer than the next morning, as he had some other friends whom he was impatient to make acquainted with his return; but as soon as he had done so, he would come back, and intrude himself upon us as a guest for a longer stay, when he should make the nature of his situation farther and more fully known to us.

Wonderfully mysterious are the ways of Providence in its dealings with us mortals! yet how often are we presuming enough to distrust its guardian care. I have frequently lamented having no near relations, with whom to share the soft affections which the susceptibility of our nature renders so delightful. Well, indeed, did my paternal guardians supply the place of parents, and of friends! Yet I feel a
delight-

delightful increase of satisfaction, at finding an uncle, whom I supposed had fallen a victim to the same ruthless hand, whose dart no mortal can escape.

Mr. Middleton has been absent from the Grove some days, being obliged to obey a summons from his commanding-officer, who came down to review the troops quartered in the country; but we expect him back again in two or three days at farthest. I suspect that a certain young lady does not think that time moves on with its usual rapidity during the absence of her favourite youth.

My uncle took an affectionate leave of us the following morning. He has been gone from the Grove four days; and we begin to look for his return with impatience.—I wish to be further acquainted with this dear relation; and Mr. Vane already feels himself much interested in whatever concerns him.

OLIVIA VANE.

L E T T E R XXIV.

SIR ROBERT CLIFTON TO HENRY VANE,
ESQUIRE.

OF what a strange composition of contradiction must the mind of that man be formed, who can quarrel with happiness; and that too, when he sees her in the brightest shape she ever appears to mortals!—You are the only being I ever met with that was daring enough to argue in direct opposition to those systems, so long established on the best of all foundations, viz.—to be dissatisfied because too happy. You ought to be called the Champion of Discontent, or the Miserable Philosopher, who found fault with Providence, for not having made him wretched; and endeavoured to counteract its benevolent designs, by determining to be so, if the utmost exertion

ertion of his fertile ingenuity could furnish him with the ingredients which compose the self-sought portion. But I think you will mangle all your efforts, be unable to make the discovery, and remain the happiest, as you are one of the most envied of the sons of men.—Respect and forgive your rival: but recollect, whilst you do so, that you possess the jewel for which he languishes in vain. Let not Mrs. Vane ever discover that you entertain the least doubt of her forgiveness.—We can any of us more easily pardon a fault that has originated from affliction, than one that proceeds from wilful and obstinate discontent. I should have thought myself unjust to the calls of friendship, had I spoken less forcibly on a subject of so much importance to the restoration of your senses; and therefore, though I should even have probed the wound you complain of till it smarted, remember that more experienced surgeons are often obliged to perform a

like operation, in order to accelerate an effectual cure.

The time of my return to the country is uncertain; it depends on the caprice of Lady Clifton, who at present cannot determine when she shall be in the humour to present me with a son, whose wished-for appearance I think of with too much pleasure to run the hazard of losing, by permitting his mother to take so long and fatiguing a journey: yet I need not tell you, that you and Mrs. Vane are the magnets who have had the attraction of fixing our future residence near the environs of Vane-Grove, and that we are both alike impatient for the time that will, we flatter ourselves, afford us ample opportunities of being blessed with a more frequent intercourse with those we are equally disposed to love and esteem.

ROBERT CLIFTON.

CHAP.

L E T T E R X X V .

MRS. VANE TO LADY CLIFTON.

MY uncle is again returned, and has brought back with him a fresh source of grateful surprize. I will not keep you in suspense. He was accompanied by Augustus Middleton, whom he presented to your astonished friend—as his son.—Yes, my Eliza, Augustus Middleton is the acknowledged son of Mr. Hamilton, and his mother his wedded wife. Had she not been so, methinks I should not have rejoiced at having found an uncle. Two short days ago those vows were sealed at the altar, which long since were registered before the throne of Heaven. I am all joy and transport.—Augustus is sedately happy :—but our Emily is wild with gratitude ;

titude ; for already has her lover's father consented to bless his son with the fair object his heart has chosen. Mrs. Hamilton is in a few weeks to increase our satisfaction, by making one in the happy circle at Vane-Grove. I am already prepared to love and revere her. Her sorrows, her long-tried virtues, have already given her a place in my heart ; and I am impatient to tell her so, and pay that attentive respect which is due to such exemplary patience, and unrepining constancy.

Yet, my uncle, my unreasonable uncle, put her sincerity to a still further trial, before he discovered to her the true state of his affairs.—Strange, rigid, and unbelieving mortals are these men ! He appeared before her in the dreaded garb of poverty ; and after the first moments of tenderness had expired, enquired whether she was still willing to take a beggar to her arms ; —She told him she was : for as interest had never influenced the choice of her heart,

heart, poverty could not lessen her affection. It was too much, my Eliza, and I fancy my uncle found himself abased by the superiority which her conduct claimed, even in his opinion, when compared with the cruelty of his own. But this dear, suffering, and amiable woman will now, I trust, meet the deserved reward to which she is entitled.

Mr. Hamilton has insisted on Mr. Vane's accepting ten thousand pounds, which, in return, he has generously declared shall be settled upon me, and the interest of it set apart for my own peculiar use. My uncle blamed him for putting it in the power of a woman to become extravagant, even though that woman was his niece. I entreated him to adopt some other method of disposing of it; but our united efforts of persuasion were exerted to no purpose. I must therefore fix upon some plan to render it useful to my fellow-creatures. Unless I do so, I am sure I shall be at a loss how to dispose or employ so large an income.

income. If it should be accompanied by either pride or avarice, I will insist on my uncle's recalling the dangerous deposit. Mr. Vane's estate is so large, and his generosity to your happy friend so unbounded, that no wish was formed that remained ungratified; therefore an increase of fortune, I believe, was not wished by either.

Mr. Hamilton is, I find, returned immensely rich; and he designs that every one near us shall partake of the affluence he has acquired. He intends to present his son, on the day of his marriage, with the same sum he has given to me, and to purchase estates in our neighbourhood for their future residence. He has sent several valuable presents to Mr. and Mrs. Goldwyn, as a small testimony of his gratitude for their kind protection of his niece; and he exults in the reflection, that his son will, in all probability, be the means of rewarding them more amply for their generous benevolence to me. Oh! how
my

my grateful heart delights in the transporting thought, that a relation of mine will raise a child of my ever dear, ever revered Mr. Goldwyn, to a situation to which his humble heart never aspired to see her placed ! Could I dispense happiness to all I love, not a branch of that invaluable stem but should flourish, with all the unfading blossoms of envied prosperity.—Emily behaves most delightfully upon this occasion : her joy is tempered with a becoming gratitude, accompanied by a humanity and diffidence that interests every one in her favour, and compels them to rejoice in her good fortune. Augustus, too, is all himself, and divides his attentions so well amongst us, that we are equally disposed to be pleased with him. My uncle never looks at his son, but the fond feeling of the father may be traced in his expressive and interesting countenance.—You will rejoice with me, I know, my friend, in the satisfaction which these unexpected and agreeable events have imparted to my soul.

foul. I who, a few weeks since, considered myself with no other relation on whom to rest my cares but my beloved Mr. Vane, now find myself blest with two such very near, such very amiable relatives!— May my humility and gratitude be equal to this additional increase of felicity!— and every action of my future life such, as will in some degree convince the world, that Providence has not given so large a portion of its blessings to one entirely undeserving the continuance of its numerous favours! This is the only ambition that reigns in the bosom of

OLIVIA VANE.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXVI.

MISS GOLDWYN TO THE REV. WILLIAM
GOLDWYN.

THE moment you receive this, set off, my dear Sir, for this place. We are all in the most dreadful anxiety that can be conceived—we fear the unhappy Mr. Vane has lost his life! no tidings have been heard of him for many hours! All the intelligence we can learn of him is, that he was seen skating upon the ice, a quarter of a mile distant from his house, about four o'clock in the afternoon.—Fly, my revered parent to your distracted Olivia, and unhappy daughter,

EMILY GOLDWYN.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R. XXVII.

THE REV. WILLIAM GOLDWYN TO
SIR ROBERT CLIFTON.

WITH the sincerest regret, and the most heart-felt concern, I sit down to inform Sir Robert Clifton, that his friend Mr. Vane is no more, and to request that he and Lady Clifton will, if possible, come to the Grove, and by their wished-for presence, in some degree, alleviate the poignant anguish which is fixed in the bosom of his disconsolate widow, who remains at present in the most alarming situation imaginable, and leads us to apprehend, the untimely death of her unfortunate husband will be speedily followed by her own, unless she can be prevailed upon to listen to the soothing voice of consolation, which every one
here

here would gladly impart; but are at present so much affected by the unhappy accident, as to be rendered unequal to the attempt. The following are the particulars of this sad catastrophe, which terminated the life of our worthy friend, and has changed Vane-Grove from a scene of the most envied felicity to that of gloomy and corroding wretchedness, and rendered its late cheerful inhabitants sorrowful emblems of despair and woe.

Some days since, Mr. Vane, with many others, spent several hours skating on a fine piece of ice, at some little distance from the house. The two Mr. Hamiltons left the Grove yesterday morning, with a promise of returning soon, accompanied by Mrs. Hamilton. A few hours after their departure, Mr. Vane informed his Olivia that he was going upon the ice; but would be home to dinner about four o'clock. The hour arrived, and Mrs. Vane waited some time, without feeling any surprise at his not returning,
knowing

knowing he was particularly fond of the amusement that occasioned his absence; and finding he did not come, sat down with my daughter to table.

In the mean time an alarm was spread amongst the servants that their master was drowned! Many people saw the dreadful accident, but durst not go near enough to give him any assistance. It seems, he had ventured on a part of the ice that, not being so well frozen gave way; and our poor friend immediately went to the bottom. Every relief that could be given was instantly attempted, but without effect. His limbs, benumbed with the severity of the cold, were in a moment rendered useless; and he was soon out of the reach of mortal power to save him. The body was not taken up till this morning.

My daughter was no sooner made acquainted with this dreadful disaster, than she dispatched a messenger to fetch Mr. and Mrs. Beevor to her friend, and sent another

another to request I would instantly set off for the Grove. I lost not a moment in obeying the unwelcome summons, and arrived here about four o'clock this morning. Never did I feel such powerful despondence as seized me on my arrival. A solemn silence prevailed in the house, yet not a creature in the family had thought of going to rest. Mr. Beevor had by degrees imparted the dreadful tidings to Mrs. Vane, who was in a state of insensibility. She lost her reason when told of her husband's death, raved with the utmost violence for some time, and then sunk into a stupor, from which they could not rouse her; and I have not yet been able to make her take notice of my being near her. Mr. Beevor apprehends the most fatal consequences, from Mrs. Vane's having miscarried in her height of phrenzy. In a few hours I expect her uncle will arrive. What will be done I know not with this dear distracted sufferer, when her senses return. I, who
ought

ought to speak peace, and inspire hope in others, stand in need of consolation myself. The agonies my Olivia endures are too much to be supported with any degree of fortitude by him ; who, though he has not a right to the name, calls himself the father of this suffering excellence, and glories in feeling for her all the tender affections of a parent.

WILLIAM GOLDWYN.

LETTER .

L E T T E R XXVIII.

SIR ROBERT CLIFTON TO THE REVEREND
WILLIAM GOLDWYN.

THE sad intelligence conveyed in your letter, my reverend correspondent, has given both me and Lady Clifton the most deep concern. The untimely death of our dear, departed friend, Mr. Vane, we shall never cease to regret. The amiable qualities he possessed, and the excellence of his heart, have long been fully known to us; and I believe his few failings proceeded from the extreme sensibility of his virtues.

Still more do we feel the poignant sorrows of the unhappy Mrs. Vane. In a separation of this melancholy kind, most truly may we say, 'Tis the survivor dies. We know the gentle nature of Mrs. Vane

too

too well, not to have the most alarming apprehensions on her account, from this last, but severest trial of her fortitude. On you we rest our hopes. 'Tis you must teach her submission to the rigour of her fate. No one else, I am convinced, would be able, like you, to reanimate her soul with hope. You are the mentor that has so long enabled her to combat all the trying strokes of adversity, which she has encountered in a manner that did not more honour to her character than it reflected on her excellent preceptor. It greatly increases our distresses that we cannot at this time fly to our distracted friend: but Lady Clifton has some weeks expected the commencement of her confinement; and her situation at this important period will neither permit her travelling with safety, nor my being absent. However, as soon as we are able, doubt not, my dear Sir, of our willingness to fly to the disconsolate relict of our regretted friend. Lady Clifton has inclosed

inclosed a few lines to Mrs. Vane, which she begs you will present to her at a proper time. She heard of this event by the unguarded carelessness of her servant, the messenger having mentioned in the family the unhappy embassy on which he came.

I was very apprehensive of the consequences that might follow this disagreeable surprize; but I begin to hope my fears will prove groundless. Let me hear from you the first moment you can send us any favourable intelligence of Mrs. Vane, and rely on my sincerity, dear Sir, when I subscribe myself, with respect and esteem, most truly yours.

ROBERT CLIFTON.

L E T T E R X X I X .

L A D Y C L I F T O N T O M R S . V A N E .

PERMIT me, my friend, my dearest Olivia, to share your sorrows. Suffer me to entreat that you would not injure your health, by giving way to a melancholy that cannot recal the cruel stroke for which you weep. Need I remind my Olivia, that it was by the arm of Omnipotence her lamented husband received his awful summons to eternity, or death in any shape would not have been permitted to snatch its devoted victim.—Ah! why should we lament the lot of those who are taken from the trying ills of life, which even the happiest amongst us find sufficient to wean us from a world never meant to be considered

sidered but as a journey to a better? Only reflect, that on that happier shore your Henry is now reposed, and that a few fleeting years will again restore him to all he loved whilst here. May time, aided by religion and resignation, teach you to consider the death of Mr. Vane with a less degree of anguish, and restore that peace to your bosom; which, if he is permitted to look down on our lower world, it would increase his immortal happiness to see you possess.

Ever most truly

and tenderly yours,

ELIZA CLIFTON.

L E T T E R XXX.

MR. BEEVOR TO LORD DAVENPORT.

MY DEAR LORD,

ARE you prepared with a sufficient degree of resolution to be informed of an event, in which your heart will perhaps find itself more interested than you imagine; but at the same time attended with circumstances that call for your fortitude to support?—The unfortunate Mr. Vane!—An untimely death has terminated his mortal existence, and called him from a world, in which he shared a large portion of happiness. Mrs. Vane is at present extremely ill, and reduced to a state of misery that beggars all description. Doubt not of her receiving from me every relief that is in my power to administer; nor will better
advice

advice be wanted. Doctor N— has visited her several times. She is surrounded with a number of her friends at this important and dangerous period, who are too much interested in whatever concerns her to neglect any means that will tend to the preservation of so invaluable a life. A few days will, I trust, enable me to send you a more favourable account, as in that time the crisis will be arrived that will bring her fever to its height. I hope much from her youth, and the strength of her constitution. If you apply to Lady Clifton, she will be able to give you intelligence of her friend, as she will be acquainted with every turn of her disorder, and of every other circumstance that you may wish on this interesting occasion to be informed of.—Ever, my good Lord,

Most respectfully
and sincerely yours,

THOMAS BEEVOR.

L E T T E R XXXI.

THE REV. WILLIAM GOLDWYN TO
SIR ROBERT CLIFTON.

MRS. Vane, after sustaining a most trying conflict with the stern conqueror of all, is, thank Heaven! restored to the fervent prayers and anxious wishes of her numerous friends. The fever, which eighteen days raged with such violence as to banish from our bosoms every remaining ray of hope, has abated; and she is, at last, pronounced out of danger by her physician, and friendly apothecary Mr. Beevor. The latter has paid her an attention, and given proofs of his experience, that have justly raised him to the highest pitch of general admiration. He stands

stands first in my opinion, as to his profession; and he has an equal claim to my friendship for the goodness of his heart, which on a former occasion I first became acquainted with.

Mrs. Vane is reduced to a mere shadow. Sickness has stolen the roses from her cheek, and sorrow robbed her of that delightful cheerfulness, which imparted pleasure to those around: But I trust that time will again restore to this dejected sufferer the blessings, of which despair has at present deprived her. She weeps incessantly; and it is with difficulty we can prevail upon her to speak. We think it best to give way to the first torrents of a grief, which reason would in vain attempt to oppose. When she talks of her deceased companion and justly-amented husband, we join with her; and our tears are grateful to her, because they are convincing testimonies that he was dear to us.—Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton and

their son came here on the first intelligence they received of Mr. Vane's death; and they followed him to that solemn receptacle, in which he was inclosed with his ancestors. Never, I believe, was a man more universally regretted.

Tell Lady Clifton, that her friend has promised me to answer her affectionate letter, as soon as she can prevail upon herself to take up a pen; but at present she is unequal to the attempt.

To-morrow Mrs. Goldwyn and myself shall leave the Grove. My Emily will continue with our Olivia. Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton, and their Augustus, will likewise remain with the hapless mourner some weeks longer.

Mr. Vane has left to his Olivia the bulk of his fortune. The ten thousand pounds presented to her by her uncle, were immediately settled upon her, and given to her own disposal. She is therefore become possessed of a very large property, which

I doubt

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I doubt not her feeling and generous heart will study to render beneficial to distress. Join with me, my friend, in wishing it may serve to render her own bosom, in every future event of life, less accessible to affliction.

Yours,

WILLIAM GOLDWYN.

L E T T E R X X X I I .

L O R D D A V E N P O R T T O M R . B E E V O R .

SHE lives, my Beevor!—and may every guardian angel of virtue waft the transporting tidings to earth's remotest bounds!—Olivia lives! and Davenport again dares to encourage the delightful hope, that she will one day live for him;—and that the cheerful sun will rise with redoubled splendor, to reflect her soft, her soothing smiles on the man who first taught her uncorrupted heart the power of Love!—Yet, even in hope I tremble, and in despair I hope.—Olivia still lives, and is free—free to choose:—But unless I am that choice, neither heaven nor earth could contain me and the mortal who should be daring enough to attempt the destruction
of

of my new-raised hopes! Watch her, Beevor, with redoubled care. Remember that Davenport, the grateful, the not long since despairing lover of Olivia, entrusts to your charge the treasure he values more than life, nay more than worlds! She must not, shall not die! A thousand tormenting deaths would hers inflict on me.

Yet, think not I could hear unmoved the fate of my envied, happy, successful rival. I even wept his untimely fall, and wished I could have saved him from the grave. I imagined I saw him contending with the waters for life and for Olivia. Oh! who would not die to be so lamented by an Olivia! Yet, tell me not, Beevor, if she weeps much longer—lest I become jealous and envious of the dead.

Methinks I walk in air:—the world is become enchanting, the people entertaining. I no longer am a recluse that fly the cheerful haunts of men, but a sociable being, that feel an inclination to attach

myself to my fellow-mortals. I pretend not to dispute that pleasure may be found on earth, or that its influence is to be denied by any but the wilful children of discontent.

Remember, Beevor, that to you is entrusted not only the life of Olivia, but that of your friend, the grateful

DAVENPORT.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXXIII.

MISS GOLDWYN TO MISS CRESWELL.

THE late awful and unfortunate event at Vane-Grove will, I know, plead my excuse with my Bertha, for the unusual length of my silence. Alas! I have done nothing but weep the unhappy death of Mr. Vane, who had, by his generosity and goodness, rendered himself inexpensively dear to me. My friend! my sister! her sufferings have likewise called for my tears and attention. She lives; and, thank Heaven! begins once more to reassume the exercise of her long-tried virtues, by the renewal of that pious resignation which so often has been called upon for its exertion: but, like gold, she is the purer for every additional trial. I look
up

up to her, Bertha, with a reverence of affection bordering upon idolatry. Surely death is in its effects sufficiently terrible, without its being attended by such a number of melancholy appendages!— Who can behold the coffin, the hearse, the grave, without terror and apprehensive trembling? Such is the attachment we feel, as mortals, to the frail body we are permitted for a time to inhabit. At a distance we think of a separation from it with calmness and composure; but when the solemn moment arrives, our feelings become more interested. To the abandoned it is then a scene of the most agonizing terror; to the good, a most awful lesson of wisdom. How much more dreadful to the tender soul of sensibility must it be, to see the last struggles of departing nature in those we love!

Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton are still at the Grove: At present they cannot think of leaving Mrs. Vane. Augustus is likewise here; and his cheerfulness has been particularly

ticularly useful to the whole circle at this gloomy period. Mrs. Hamilton is a most amiable, accomplished, and interesting woman: She is possessed of a heart that, by having been tried with sorrow, shares in a more lively manner the distresses of others. Well does she deserve the prospect of felicity, which promises to crown her latter days with prosperity and contentment! I already feel for her the affection of a daughter; and Mrs. Vane considers her as a blessing given by a watchful Providence, to soften and alleviate the rigour of her sufferings.

Notwithstanding the particular severity of the season, Augustus, accompanied by your Emily, frequently rambles round the Grove; and in the various beauties which even the present scene affords, we cease to regret the more enchanting sweets that Nature has wisely ordained should give place to the present; and by that means render the delightful change doubly grateful. Every tree is now beautifully decorated

corated by the frost, which clings about the branches, long since stripped of their verdure ; whilst the faint rays of the sun just serve to make their frozen gems resplendent. Though the thrush, linnæ, and nightingale refuse to entertain us with their melodious concerts ; though the air is piercingly cold, and holds the silver rivulets in chains of ice, yet does the entertaining face of nature exhibit a thousand charms.

The hour is arrived in which I promised to attend Mrs. Vane ; therefore excuse me, Bertha, for hastily throwing aside the pen to obey the calls of friendship, gratitude, and love.

EMILY GOLDWYN.

LETTER

L E T T E R X X X I V .

MRS. VANE TO LADY CLIFTON.

I Take up my pen, in obedience to the commands of friendship : but alas ! of what can I write but misery ? I was the adopted child of sorrow from my birth ; and I shall continue so till laid in the mournful grave, which has so lately taken from me the dearest treasure I possessed. In my Henry's tomb my happiness is now inclosed ; and till the fetters of death are shaken off by the last tremendous summons, I have no hope of its being restored. Ah ! that my life had been allowed to pay the forfeiture of his ! — 'Tis a selfish wish, and I submit.

You anxiously enquire after my health. 'Tis better, Eliza : — But where now are the
the

the blessings with which it is said to be attended? My mind is too sick to acknowledge, as it ought, the relief which the weak body has received from fever and from pain.

Yet, why should mortals dare to murmur and complain, whilst the experienced uncertainty of life shews the folly of fixing our hearts upon any of its enjoyments, or daring to rest our hopes on what we know is mortal? We are surely more apt to lament the fall of those who are snatched to an untimely grave, without being indulged with one short moment in which to settle their account with death, or prepare for that unknown change which lies beyond its reach. Human nature must feel the effects of the sudden changes to which it is exposed, whilst to complain is a privilege to which the unhappy claim a right, from the indulgence of their friends.

How did I once regret being confined to this place? I should now think it a
paradise,

paradise, if never permitted to exceed its bounds, had my companion been left me.

But solitary and comfortless are now the haunts which content and cheerfulness lately rendered pleasing. Every thing in nature is now equally dull and dreary. Music has lost its power to charm, company is irksome, and all amusements tasteless.—The approach of spring I once beheld with impatient delight. Hopeless of happiness, what is spring to me? Each hour is marked with anguish: for he who shared those pleasures with me is gone for ever.—Tell me, Lady Clifton, why was Olivia selected from the rest of woman-kind, to have the severest shafts of adversity pointed against her bosom?

What Solon told Cræsus, in relation to his claim of happiness, I am convinced was right, That death alone could disclose the secret.

I will complain no more; my grief shall not be allowed to become burthensome

L E T T E R XXXV.

LORD DAVENPORT TO MR. BEEVOR.

I GRANT, thou favourite son of Esculapius, to friendship all the merits that are its due. 'Tis a soft soother of the human heart when oppressed with cares ; 'tis a resource to which we fly when encircled with distress ; and on its generous bosom the care-worn son of misery relies for consolation. I never denied its power, or fled from the delights it offered, till under the dominion of discontent. But tell me, thou cold reasoner, is there not a passion far more delightful to the soul of man ? I mean a friendship founded on love, or love refined and heightened by friendship ?—I would give my argument
sufficient

sufficient weight, to convince you of its truth ; but I am at this moment too happy, restless, and impatient to be a philosopher, even in theory.

The certainty of Mrs. Vane's recovery, the idea of her being free again to choose, the knowledge I have that I was once dear to her, and the being at liberty to tell her of my love, which never yet forsook the first fair object of its adoration, —these are the only reflections that can actuate the sanguine heart of Davenport ; and so fully do they engross his every thought, that no other, sleeping or waking, can find a momentary admission, should she prove resolute in refusing me ! —But I will not, dare not look that way. Surely I have already been sufficiently punished by merciless fortune, without that additional stroke of insupportable misery.

I know that you will laugh, after my panegyric on love, at the pains I have
taken

taken to convince you, that love is composed of inconsistencies, that it makes us feel delight in torments, ease in misfortune, pleasure from pain, and even hope in despair; but I will in future be resolutely determined to cherish hope.—The noble sentiments of pity and generosity, I know, were early and carefully implanted in the mind of my gentle Olivia by the best of men, whose meek spirit had no vice to cherish, no pride to mortify either itself or any one else; and whilst he taught others the rules of right and wrong, convinced them, by his undeviating life, that he could practise what he taught: and I want not to be told, that the adopted daughter of his affection retains the honeyed lessons of benevolence in all their original purity.—Can she then condemn me, for one fault, to a life of never ceasing misery?

Take care, Beavor, that this angel does not steal from us, to join her sister angels
in

in their kindred skies, whilst we, frail mortals, are planning schemes to detain her amongst us. Watch her, therefore, with unceasing attention. As you value the peace of Davenport preserve Olivia, and be my more than friend, the guardian of my happiness.

To no other being do I thus freely explain my sentiments, or venture to disclose the real situation of my heart.

The woes occasioned by love meet with little compassion from the world;—unfeeling ridicule will ever aim her shafts at them, and censure eagerly condemn, without making any allowance for the strength of that passion to which, I believe, every inhabitant of the world, at one part or other of their lives, are obliged to submit.

This perverse Lady Clifton, to whom I have already ventured to impart the revival of my long lost hopes, has been in the straw but one week : when able to take so long

a journey, she proposes, accompanied by Sir Robert, to visit her friend; and they take infinite pains to convince me, that any attempt to see Mrs. Vane, till a longer time has elapsed, would by her be considered as unpardonable, and by the world as imprudent. They have, however, graciously promised to venture the pronounciation of my name to the fair widow, during their stay at the Grove—more, they laughingly tell me, they dare not undertake in my behalf. I am much pleased with this amiable, good-humoured couple, with whom I have lately spent a great deal of my time; and my little Olivia is already very fond of Lady Clifton.

Remember, Beevor, that I bespeak an apartment in your house, to be ready for my reception against the day on which Sir Robert and Lady Clifton make their appearance at the Grove. I insist on being your boarder during my stay at ***;

the

the length of which depends entirely on that ever-adorable and most lovely fair one of her sex, who will for ever continue to rule the future destiny of the enraptured

DAVENPORT.

C H A P. LV.

Narrative renewed.

IN this place we must again return to narrative for the carrying on our history, as a frequent intercourse between the principal parties made such material interruption in their correspondence, as would render it too unconnected to convey an account with the regularity and precision that is necessary; and shall only have recourse to those letters for its continuance, which will be most useful in discovering the situation of the writers.

Miss Goldwyn, about three months after the death of Mr. Vane, was, with difficulty, prevailed upon to give her hand to Augustus; so great was her reluctance to be separated from her disconsolate

solate friend, to whom her young heart was justly and most tenderly attached. On receiving, however, a promise from her lover and his parents that she should be allowed to dedicate and spend a great portion of her time with Mrs. Vane, she consented to become the wife of him who had long been the unrivalled possessor of her heart. The marriage was celebrated at Mr. Goldwyn's, and he himself joined the hand of his daughter with that of Mr. Hamilton, whose father acted with the utmost generosity in respect to settlements, &c.

A few days after the consummation of these happy nuptials, the young pair returned to Vane-Grove, and were received, by its fair owner, with a cheerfulness that increased their pleasure: they continued with her till the day previous to the arrival of Sir Robert and Lady Clifton; but Mrs. Vane would not consent to their departure till they mutually promised to

return, as soon as her visitors should leave her.

Mrs. Vane could not meet her friends without feeling a thousand tender remembrances revived by their presence. The happy hours they had passed together, during the time they were last at the Grove, were immediately recollected, and the dreadful accident which had prevented the present moments being delightful, brought to her mind the whole of that tremendous moment which had terminated her happiness. For some minutes tears alone explained the conflicts which each had to sustain on this occasion; nor could they, till some hours had elapsed, bring themselves to converse with any degree of composure.

Lady Clifton, unlike many of our modern mothers, could not think of being separated from her little son, and had, therefore, brought him with her to the Grove. The introduction of the young stranger, who was soon admitted, gave a
more

more cheerful turn to the conversation; and he was welcomed by Mrs. Vane with a thousand fond careffes.

My fair readers may, perhaps, be impatient, at this period, to receive some tidings of Lord Davenport: we will, therefore, inform them that he arrived at Mr. Beavor's the same hour in which his friends reached the Grove; and there he determined to remain till some fortunate opportunity should be found that would be favourable to his introduction, for which he waited with all the eager impatience of a lover; and was, with the utmost difficulty, prevailed upon not to make his appearance, without waiting the tiresome suspense of a formal introduction, which it wounded his heart to think of being necessary.

Here then, we must leave him, in order to return to our party at the Grove. With much persuasion the friends of Mrs. Vane prevailed upon her to accompany them in their airings, which at this time

was necessary to the health of both ladies; After being out once or twice her reluctance abated, and, in a short time, she became one of their party without further willingness; and very soon found the good effects which air and exercise produced. They likewise prevailed upon her to admit the visits of a few select friends, and no longer refuse to share in those innocent amusements in which she once delighted. This was gaining a vast deal: and Lady Clifton, after having been eagerly solicited by Lord Davenport, with whom she and Sir Robert had many stolen interviews, ventured to pronounce his name, and told Mrs. Vane, that she was surpris'd she should so long have omitted to enquire after so old and partial a friend.

Olivia started at the well-known name, and with blushing confusion replied, that her present distressing situation must plead her excuse for any omission she had been guilty of, in neglecting to enquire after those

those who had any claim to her remembrance. Lady Clifton, after some little conversation in respect to the present state of Lord Davenport's affairs, thought it better to drop the subject; but did not do so till after she informed Mrs. Vane, that she and Sir Robert had lately become acquainted with his lordship; that they were upon terms of intimacy; and that they felt themselves attached to him and his sweet Olivia, who was a most lively child. Mrs. Vane during the above recital was both reserved and silent; but when she retired to her chamber, she could not help recollecting all that had passed, and thinking it very singular that Lady Clifton had chosen to introduce so strange and unexpected a conversation; and she wished, with a sigh, that the subject might never be revived, as Lord Davenport's present or future situation would not be of the least consequence to her.

Mr. Beeyor, a few days after, called

upon Mrs. Vane, and after congratulating her with friendly warmth on her amended looks, which now promised a speedy return of health, ventured to inform her; Lord Davenport was at that time his visitor; and that he was commissioned by his noble guest to intreat that Mrs. Vane would permit him to pay his respects to her at the Grove. The surprize which took possession of Olivia's features at this moment, was too striking to pass unnoticed by him who had occasioned it by the mention of his embassy. She was distressed, and, for a moment, knew not whether to permit or refuse the self-sought invitation: but recollecting that it would look particular to prohibit his lordship's calling upon her, and that a refusal might be liable to misconstructions, she had just resolution, with faltering accents, to reply, that as she saw but little company, she would have been glad that his lordship had not thought of the ceremony of making her a visit; but if he should

should continue in the mind to do her that honour, she would certainly receive him.

No sooner had Mr. Beevor obtained leave for the admission of his friend than he was impatient to impart the glad tidings to him; and so eager was his lordship to avail himself of the reluctant invitation that had been extorted from the lovely widow, that it was with some difficulty he was prevailed upon to defer his visit to the following day, when, finding it impossible any longer to prevent his impatient and enamoured guest from gratifying his wishes in beholding the dear enslaver of his heart, Mr. Beevor agreed to accompany him; and they arrived at the Grove, without any other ceremony than sending a servant into the room to pronounce their request to be admitted.

C H A P. LVI.

The Conflicts of Love, Hope, and Despair.

TO describe the fears, the not un-
delightful conflicts of Lord Daven-
port at the moment of his being desired
to walk into the room, in which was
seated the dejected Mrs. Vane, would be
an attempt idle and fruitless. He ap-
proached her with a kind of awe and
transport that seemed contending for
victory; and he paid his compliments in
a language scarcely intelligible; nor was
he answered with a much greater degree
of firmness. Sir Robert and Lady Clif-
ton, by addressing his Lordship, relieved
him from his embarrassments; and he
was very soon enabled to join in the con-
versation which took place, with some
degree

degree of composure. Mrs. Vane, during his stay, preserved an universal silence, and though she wished to shake off a reserve, to which she was unaccustomed, she found herself unable to accomplish her desire. Nothing very material passed at this time that could give Mrs. Vane the least reason to imagine that his Lordship had any farther intention in making it, than to pay her the civility, which he might think was due to any acquaintance in a situation similar to her own. She was, however, much discontented with her own behaviour upon the occasion; and wished she had been able to have received him with less discomposure on his first entrance, and less reserve after the first introduction was over.

Lord Davenport, ever ready to torment himself with all the lover's catalogue of doubts and fears; imagined that the whole of Mrs. Vane's behaviour had been such, as not only discovered the most determined indifference, but a kind of dislike

like and terror : not once had her languid eye met his, not one smile had appeared to tell him that he was a welcome guest ! He passed a restless night, and the next morning, when he rode out, with a kind of magnetical impulse, directed his horse towards the Grove. However, on his approaching the enchanting spot that contained the treasure dearest to his soul, he found himself attracted by some invisible charm to go on ; and he called at the door to enquire after the health of Mrs. Vane and her friends. He was not invited in ; and he returned with an increasing load of despondence and discontent.

The next day, however, he determined once more to attempt gaining admittance ; and he succeeded. His Lordship felt himself less embarrassed on his entrance, and Mrs. Vane discovered less discomposure and surprise at seeing him. Lady Clifton had taught her to expect the continuance of his visits ; and enquired

quired if they would be disagreeable to her? She made little reply to the question of her friend, who could not, with all her persuasions, prevail upon her to satisfy the impatience of a curiosity, which proceeded from the sincerity of her affection; but Mrs. Vane considered such interrogations as premature. The resolutions that she had formed in her own mind, she determined strictly to adhere to; and therefore, whatever designs Lord Davenport might have formed, or whatever hopes he might cherish, whenever the moment arrived for an explanation of them, she should know how she was to act; but was firmly resolute that no persuasions should ever prevail upon her to alter the plan which she had laid down for her future conduct.

Lord Davenport continued to repeat his visits more frequently; yet not a single ray of hope had found its way to his bosom. Mrs. Vane, 'tis true, sometimes received him with smiles, and listened to
his

his conversation with complacency; nevertheless, she was too placid, too serene, and composed to be under the influence of a passion that so long had existed in his bosom to torment him. If his presence afforded any satisfaction, her absence gave no pain. These fears, therefore, had prevented him giving a single hint of the hopes he had dared to encourage, and which he dreaded an open avowal of his passion would crush forever. He therefore determined to rest as satisfied with his present situation as his own heart would let him; and trust his future destiny to the uncertain influence of time and chance.

Sir Robert and Lady Clifton, after staying six weeks at the Grove, were obliged to return to town; and they did not propose revisiting the country till their own house was fitted up for their reception, which in a few months they expected would be completed. Mrs. Vane,

Vane, on the departure of her guests, claimed the promise that had been made her by Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton, who were too ready to obey the summons to let her remain long by herself.

Mrs. Vane often wondered that Lord Davenport continued to reside so long in the country, nor did she ever hear any talk of his leaving it. She wished he might not have encouraged any hopes which depended on her to realize. Though she had outlived her own happiness, she trembled at the terrifying idea of destroying the peace of others; she thought it particularly unfortunate that she could not be left uninterrupted, to spend her life in the manner her widowed heart had made choice of.

C H A P. LVII.

Rational and Laudable Amusements.

OLIVIA had already established two useful schools, for the benefit of the young and un instructed inhabitants of the village. She set apart a certain sum to be distributed annually for the relief of the aged and infirm. To every young girl, whose conduct was found without reproach, she gave a small portion on the day of marriage, with a promise not to withdraw her bounty, if she found they continued to deserve it. Olivia likewise determined, as her farms became vacant, to have them lessened, whereby a larger number of honest and industrious people might get a comfortable livelihood.

As soon as the young girls had been
taught

taught to work, they were constantly employed with making cloathing for the old people she maintained; and the boys were, by her direction, after school-hours, engaged in some useful branch of husbandry, to enable them to get their own bread when the time limited for their going to school should be expired. Through these means they were, by being constantly employed, kept from idleness and vice, and their manual task was considered as an indulgence; because, if well performed, it was sure to be followed with a liberal reward from the benovolent hand of their generous patrons.

From such employments as these, Mrs. Vane found relief to those sorrows that the inexorable hand of death had brought upon her: and if she was far, very far removed from happiness, found herself much nearer to contentment, than she had ever supposed Providence again would place her.

Lord

Lord Davenport met with another friend in the gentle and good-humoured Mrs. Hamilton. Neither she nor Augustus were unacquainted with the misery and discontent that had accompanied him through life. They compassionated his sufferings, and wished the hour might arrive that should find Mrs. Vane less averse to the renewal of those vows, the forfeiture of which had been attended with such a long and trying train of ills: but from what they were able to discover, from the sentiments of their friend, they apprehended that the closing scene of his life would not be more serene or bright than the part of it that had already passed so heavily along the rugged road of time, which flies not with the sons and daughters of misery. Pleased, however, with his conversation; improved by his manners, instructed by his sentiments, and delighted with his good-humour and affability, they pressed him to make his visits more frequently; and as far as they
durst.

clurst venture to oblige him, without offending Mrs. Vane, they gave him every opportunity they could contrive, to converse with the companion he wished to please and entertain.

But still the hours fled, and he made no progress towards the accomplishment of those wishes, his heart was so eagerly impatient to obtain. He trembled to think that the moment he ventured to declare his passion might terminate his visits at the Grove; and he could not suppose any ill so terrible as being sentenced to outlive his hopes, and banished from the spot that contained all he had ever found on earth to render life valuable and pleasing.

The following letter from Lady Clifton, called upon Mrs. Vane for a more full explanation of her sentiments respecting Lord Davenport than she had been able to prevail upon her to give in an hour of personal intercourse.

LETTER

L E T T E R X X X V I .

Lady Clifton to Mrs. Vane.

LONDON.

WE safely arrived, after a pleasant journey, in this noisy and bustling place; but not without feeling infinite regret at leaving the hospitable and friendly Lady of the Grove, to whom we think ourselves much obliged for the agreeable hours we passed there. Our young traveller supported his journey better than we expected; and the little fellow is indebted to you for the fattest pair of cheeks that were ever given to one so lately entered on his pilgrimage.

Tell me, my friend, what have you done with the poor captive that we left to console you in our absence? I hope he has ere now fallen upon his knees, and made

made a full and true confession; not only of his penitence for past errors, but of the fault of which every one, I believe, is convinced he is still found guilty—that of being determined to love you, so long as he is permitted to live; therefore, do set about contriving some method of rewarding him for what he has been obliged to suffer; because you happened to be formed more to his taste than any other of your sex. Let me tell you, that I think you have a great deal to answer for, being possessed of so many acquired accomplishments, when nature had before studied to make them unnecessary. What business had you to steal the beauties of the mind, whilst you were indulged with so large a portion of personal charms? As to wisdom, you ought not to have had any thing to do with it: therefore, let me prevail upon you to descend from your celestials, and act as we, less perfect mortals, should do in a like situation. You must permit Lord Davenport to
 hope,

hope, that the judge in whose hands, or rather in whose heart he has rested his cause, will not prove inexorable when called upon to pronounce his sentence.

I assure you, that if he is condemned, he has many friends much inclined to recommend him to mercy; and I know not if a petition will not reach the throne in his favour, if you will not be prevailed upon to listen to the more gentle persuasions of love and pity: therefore, I intreat you would take the cause into consideration, before we and the rest of the world proceed against you.

To be serious, my friend, I do think you ought to smile on Lord Davenport: his faithful, his unceasing constancy deserves to be rewarded with the hand he is withheld from soliciting, from a dread of disappointment.

Let me know whether he has yet ventured to make a declaration of his passion, and tell me on what you have determined.—Ah! had you witnessed his sufferings
when

when your life was thought in danger, it would be impossible for you to doubt one moment of the influence which you hold over the heart of the most amiable of men.

As the following little history has made some bustle in the fashionable world, and been the chief subject of conversation amongst the numerous parties that every day assemble; in order to pass sentence on those who happen to come under the reach of their censure, I inclose it for your perusal, and flatter myself it will afford you some entertainment.

You well remember Miss Delia Townly, who frequently called at our house during your stay in town. We have been acquainted from our infancy.—Young, gay, and entitled to expect a large fortune from several relations to whom she was very nearly allied; she determined to avail herself of the adventitious advantages thrown in her way, and enjoy life whilst youth and beauty were

in her possession. Having, from a child, been accustomed to her humour being indulged, she, at the age of seventeen, entered with spirit into all the amusements which London has such infinite variety.— She never troubled herself to make serious reflections, or to look forwards beyond the present moment.

Followed to every public place by a throng of admirers; by nature gay, and by flattery made a coquette, she took a pleasure in exhibiting her lovers, because it served at the same moment to shew the power of her charms. For a long time she equally distributed her smiles amongst them so equally, that if no one could boast more reason to hope than another, none of them thought they had occasion to despair. Captain Belmont, a young officer in the guards, flattered himself with more sanguine hopes than any of the rest encouraged.

He had followed her long, and loved her sincerely. Sometimes he thought she
appeared

appeared to pay him more attention than she did to the others, when perhaps the next hour his hopes were humbled, by observing her to listen with the same apparent pleasure to some of his rivals. But all his rhetoric proved unavailing to bring her to make any confession in his favour. Yet no discouragement, however mortifying, was sufficient to make him give up the pursuit. Whilst matters were thus circumstanced, a young Baronet, just returned from Paris, made his appearance in town, and very soon enlisted himself amongst the number of the gay Delia's admirers. So potent and dangerous a rival alarmed the whole corps of Cupid's votaries; but none of them so much as Captain Belmont. He watched the approaches of this fashionable rival with the utmost vigilance, and saw that Delia paid him (as his jealousy taught him to think) unusual attention. He accompanied her to every public place, sat next her, danced with her, played with her

fan, and, in the true Parisian stile, laughed if she frowned, swore that she loved him, and doubted not, but, in spite of a thousand contending rivals, the prize would be his own.

Captain Belmont, unable to bear the insolence of this new enemy to his repose, sent him a challenge. The parties met, and Belmont was dangerously wounded.—

Sir George Harley, who wanted neither humanity nor good-humour, no sooner saw his rival fall, than he felt the most deep distrets at beholding the situation to which he had been the means of reducing him. His own house being not far distant from the spot on which they had fought, he had his adversary instantly conveyed to it; and the best advice was immediately called in to his assistance. Sir George attended him, and spared neither trouble or expence to save the life which he had before eagerly fought to destroy. Belmont, after suffering extremely from the anguish of his wounds, appeared

appeared in a fair way to recover, and, struck with the care and generous attention paid him by his rival, frankly acknowledged that he was entitled to his utmost gratitude.

A friendship commenced between the two gentlemen ; and Sir George confessed that he never had any serious intentions of matrimony, but was actuated merely by the gaiety of unthinking vanity, to pay his devoirs to Miss Townly, from whose flattering attentions to his vows, he had been led to believe that he did not stand undistinguished in her favour : but swore he had never yet met with a woman whom he had thought worthy the hazard of being run through the body for ; that only the fear of being branded for a coward in the present case, could have induced him to accept the challenge of Captain Belmont, in a cause wherein he owned his heart was but weakly interested.

A plan was immediately agreed upon between the friends, to take advantage of

a report that had prevailed, of Captain Belmont's being killed in the duel, in order to put Miss Townly's heart to the test, and discover whether she really felt any regard for the vanquished Lover or not. Silence and secrecy was instantly insisted upon from the surgeons, in respect to the life or death of their patient; and they determined, if possible, to make out what effect the supposed tragical scene would have upon this lovely, but giddy coquette. Very few days answered their purpose. Miss Townly was acquainted with the duel, which her charms and cruelty had occasioned; and the untimely end of the unfortunate Belmont was told her, without any preface, aggravated with ten thousand melancholy additions, to which he was indebted to the invention of the public, who, in a business of this kind, are seldom known to confine themselves to matters of fact. The astonished and terrified Delia, thrown off her guard by the suddenness of her surprise, immediately

diately discovered a secret, which she had not more carefully concealed from the world than she had endeavoured to do from herself, was unable to support the disappointment and anguish which her heart experienced. She shut herself up in her apartment, refused to see any company; and a fever being brought on by her distress, raved of Captain Belmont. Her friends were inexpressibly concerned; and the alarming account of her situation made known to her lover. To be convinced of the truth of what he heard, and eager to know whether he himself was not deceived by the fertile inventions of fiction, it was instantly agreed upon, that Sir George Harley should pay a visit to the fair invalid; when, from the manner of his reception, they would be able to judge if they might venture to believe the reports that had been circulated.

Sir George that same evening ordered his chair, and desired his people to carry him to Mr. Townly's. On sending in

his name, the father of Delia desired him to be admitted; wishing to be informed of the particulars of an affair that had involved him and his whole family in distress, by the effect it had on the health and spirits of his daughter.

Sir George, on being eagerly interrogated by Mr. Townly to give him an account of the unhappy affair that had, for some days, made so much clamour, and which he had been repeatedly told was occasioned between the contending parties, by the unthinking conduct of Miss Townly, felt both confusion and concern on hearing a short recital of only part of the story. Sir George Harley then intreated to have the honour of speaking to Miss Townly before he mentioned any farther particulars respecting the unlucky rencontre that was the occasion of his present visit. Mr. Townly said, his daughter had been extremely indisposed from the time she had been informed of the duel; but as she was then better, and had

had that day been able to sit up in her dressing-room, he would venture to introduce him. Mr. Townly was in hopes, from this interview, he should be able to discover the truth of the whole affair, and from what the unhappy dispute had originated that had occasioned the death of an amiable and worthy man.

Sir George, who wished on his part to have his curiosity satisfied respecting the situation of Miss Townly, as much as Mr. Townly did to gratify his own, as to the cause of the dispute, eagerly followed Mr. Townly to his daughter's apartment. On their entrance, she was sitting in a dejected posture; her face, which was pale as death, rested against the side of an easy chair, on the arm of which her own was placed, and held up to support her head. On hearing the name of Harley pronounced by her father, she looked up; till then, she had not even seemed to know that any one had come into her room. No sooner did she see Sir George, than she flew

off her seat, screamed with terror, and declared, she would not be a moment in the same house with the destroyer of her dear, her murdered Belmont. Sir George gracefully bent one knee to the ground, and intreated to be heard; but she would not be prevailed upon to hear any thing he had to say; and appearing as if she would faint, the gentlemen hastily withdrew.

Sir George, however, did not depart without acquainting the distressed father of the now unhappy and penitent Delia with the whole account of the transaction; mentioned the danger the Captain had been in from his wounds, but of his being nearly recovered from them; of his having been carefully attended in his house from the moment of his fall: to that circumstance, he said, was owing the report which had been circulated of his death. The old gentleman was transported, and hugged Sir George for the good news he brought; vowed he would
see

see his old friend, the Captain, next morning; and if he wanted farther nursing, believed he could tell him of a person that would gladly undertake the office. Sir George now took leave, and was eager to impart the success of his embassy to his friend, whom he knew would be on the rack of impatience till he returned.

You need not doubt, my Olivia, but Captain Belmont was rendered inexpressibly happy at being convinced of his Delia's affection: He no longer remembered her former cruelty, or his own sufferings. The situation to which his supposed death had reduced Miss Townly engrossed his every thought. Mr. Townly, on the departure of Sir George Harley, hurried to his daughter's apartment, eager to remove from her mind the distresses which he found she was so unable to support. He was, however, obliged to proceed with the utmost caution, and by degrees communicated to her the happy

and unexpected intelligence he had received. Her joy was beyond all bounds:—a burthen of woe was removed from her bosom;—her lover lived!—serenity was again restored to her, at the very moment she had imagined it lost for ever;—the medical tribe's advice was no longer necessary; Sir George Harley had proved the best physician.

In a few days Captain Belmont was able to pay his fair mistress a visit. After what had occurred he doubted not of meeting a favourable reception; nor were his wishes disappointed: and, before his departure, he had the delightful satisfaction of hearing Miss Townly confess, that his death would have robbed her future life of every remaining charm.

A few days before we arrived in town, the nuptials of these singular lovers were celebrated; and, by an innocent and well-meaning stratagem, the happiness of the parties secured. My young and beautiful friend is now cured of every propensity
to

to coquetry, and her amiable husband convinced that her former errors proceeded not from the depravity of heart, but the gaiety of unthinking prosperity. Sir George Harley is almost always seen in every public place with the happy pair. Mrs. Belmont has long since forgiven him the momentary distress he brought upon her, and considers him as the benevolent being who raised her husband from the grave, in which she had believed him buried; and by so doing, restored her likewise, by the friendly miracle, to life and happiness.

Thus ends the history which has of late afforded such a fund of conversation and wit to the dear lovers of scandal and news. I must leave the contents of my letter to apologize for its unreasonable length; and for the mighty pains I have taken to amuse you, I expect you will instantly set about composing a history of your own situation and proceedings in return. If you and Lord Davenport have
been

been able to conquer all your differences, doubts, and delicacies, remember I am willing to become a witness, and see the account finally settled at the altar on the shortest notice.

ELIZA CLIFTON.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXXVII.

MRS. VANE TO LADY CLIFTON.

NOTWITHSTANDING the mighty pains you boast of having taken to afford me entertainment, I am more than half inclined to be seriously angry with you. Thank Heaven, at present I have no reason to suppose that Lord Davenport's passion exists but in your inventive imagination : if it does, I should lament being under the necessity of giving him pain. You tell me of his having suffered years of misery on my account ; yet at the moment of doing so, unkindly avoid to mention those sorrows he brought upon your friend by his unguarded conduct. Was it the fault of Olivia Elford that Edward Davenport forsook her, and wedded

wedded another? and was it not for the imprudence of his unthinking repentance that she was two long years deserted by the tenderest of husbands? And would you, because his lordship had smarted for his follies, and repented his infidelity, have me marry the man, for whose fault my Henry fled his native land, and became an exile from England and Olivia? I forgave the desertion of my lover in the very moments I wept and lamented his inconstancy: but, believe me, Lady Clifton, I should find it a much harder task to teach my heart how to love Lord Davenport—my tenderest affections are rested beneath the turf which incloses my Henry's remains—why then will you endeavour to disturb the repose of those un-aspining wishes that have fled into the bosom of the earth for shelter from every future storm of life and love?

I am angry with Augustus and Emily; they are much too partial to the being whose cause you have so warmly espoused.

I have

I have imposed silence on them by my tears: let those that have dropped on this paper have the same effect on you.— Write on any other subject, and be assured, your letters and advice will be ever welcome to your friend.

Much as I was ever taught to despise the character of a coquette, I rejoice that one of that mischief-making tribe has been reformed, and prevented doing farther injury. May the danger she has escaped be ever remembered to correct any future errors, and her sufferings have sufficient weight to prevent others from following so despicable an example!

My pensioners, and the young family I have in a manner adopted, afford me most agreeable employment for every leisure hour.—In relieving distress and encouraging virtue, I find a momentary relief from sorrow; and whilst so employed have almost forgotten I was ever more happy. I wish I had sufficient power of persuasion, to prevail upon some of the
wretched

wretched sons and daughters of Affluence
to try the admirable recipe, which I have
found so beneficial in healing the wounds
of disappointed happiness.

OLIVIA VANE.

CHAP.

C. H A P. LVIII.

The Contest remains doubtful.

AT this time, whilst in the bosom of Mrs. Vane grief and resignation are struggling for victory, and the adversary she had so long contended with was beginning to withdraw his forces, Lord Davenport was again becoming the victim of despair. Made desperate by the severity of his feelings, he determined to make use of the first moment that offered the least shadow of hope to know his doom: But resolved, however severe the sentence, never to give up the pursuit, on which all his hopes of felicity were rested. Not more resolute should Mrs. Vane be in refusing to receive him as a lover, than he would

would prove in persevering to convince her that he was one.

Without being indulged with a single invitation, he constantly visited at the Grove. Sometimes Love was the only food he met with ; yet he complained not of the diet. In the presence of a beloved object, people are apt to forget they are mortal.

One day, on his arrival at the Grove, he was informed that Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton were gone to pay a visit in the neighbourhood ; but that Mrs. Vane was walking in the garden. He trembled with joy at the opportunity which chance afforded him ; yet determined to avail himself of it. He jumped off his horse, gave him to the care of a servant, and, with agitated steps, went in pursuit of the lovely wanderer, whom he found seated in an alcove, and singing a plaintive air, which was accompanied by some of the softest tones of her guitar.— On seeing Lord Davenport approach, Olivia hastily arose.

He

He gently ventured to re-seat her; and entreated she would continue to gratify his listening attention with the harmonious sound of her enchanting voice. Olivia begged to be excused; and once more made an effort to escape, fearful that the moment was arrived which her apprehensive modesty and feeling tenderness had so much dreaded.

Lord Davenport, made resolute by despair, was not so easily prevailed upon to lose the opportunity which fortune appeared to have thrown in his way. He caught her reluctant hand, whilst kneeling at her feet, and entreated to be heard:—
“ That I have long loved you, and you only, why do you make me tremble to avow? or why do you blush indignantly to hear? You once generously pardoned the crime of inconstancy. Can you be more rigid in judging the effects of a love that has withstood the influence of time, and resolutely contended with despair? You must either bid me encourage hope,
—or,

—or, know, you will pronounce the sentence of my death : Nor do I believe that even death itself could release me from those fetters in which, bound by an invisible chain, you have long held me captive.”

Olivia, unable to make any reply to the tender solemnity of this address, took out her smelling-bottle ; a tear silently stole down her cheek. Lord Davenport, alarmed at seeing her so agitated — “ And have you caught the soft contagion ? ” he cried : — “ And do you weep for me ? If you do, in mercy tell me so ; — suspense at this time is insupportable.”

‘ I weep for those sufferings, my Lord,’ cried the blushing Olivia, ‘ which you tell me I have unfortunately brought upon you ; and I lament my inability to lessen them, by a compliance with any request which your love may have encouraged you to make. My widowed heart can know no second choice. All my tenderest affections are inclosed in the tomb which
holds

holds the dear remains of my lamented husband. Around that sad receptacle my still surviving love perpetually wanders. Though in life he once feared a rival, in death he has none to apprehend. When you wedded another, remember, my Lord, Mr. Vane condescended to take the hand which you refused. I mean not this as a reproach, but a justification of my conduct, if it wants one.'

“ And can you call it pardoning my crime,” cried his Lordship, “ whilst at the same moment you pronounce so heavy, so dreadful a curse against me? Either kill me at once, or save me from the torture of despair. Again you weep!—Cruel Olivia! Your triumph will be soon complete; soon will you be informed that the unfortunate Davenport has breathed his last sigh in prayers for your happiness.”

‘ Are these tears, this anguish, proofs of cruelty?’ replied the weeping Olivia. ‘ Endeavour to forget me, or think me unworthy to possess your love. Be content

tent with my friendship; 'tis all I have to give; therefore leave me—in pity leave me:—I dare not be unjust. I am content to suffer; but I cannot cease to weep the death of Mr. Vane.'

Lord Davenport trembled at the warmth of that tenderness which he heard lament the fall of the rival with whom he had still to contend, and on whose death his hopes had again revived: yet he could scarcely refrain from adoring the virtuous fortitude which so resolutely pronounced the destruction of those hopes.

“ Ah! why,” said the now despairing lover, “ why do you, my Olivia (for in the hope of one day calling you mine I must still live) why, at the moment you wound my soul, do you force me to add admiration to love? and whilst you endeavour to extinguish a flame, make it burn the brighter? Remember, you have promised me your friendship: I shall avail myself of that promise, to see you often,

or

or tremble for the consequence of your unheard-of cruelty.”

Olivia, terrified and unable to sustain any further conflicts at this moment, told his Lordship, that so long as he would be satisfied with her friendship, she should not attempt to refuse seeing him amongst the number of those she reckoned friends; and it would greatly increase her happiness to hear him one day acknowledge that he ceased to consider her in any other light.

Lord Davenport, seeing her eagerly preparing to depart, and rendered half frantic by the violence of his passion, and the resolute refusal he had received, once more eagerly dropt on his knees :—“ Forget you !” he wildly exclaimed ; “ forget you I never can ! And may Heaven shower down the heaviest curses on my head, curses yet unthought of, when I endeavour to forget Olivia ! No ; the remnant of my miserable days shall be spent in lamenting that hour in which I

sacrificed the sincerest passion that ever inhabited the heart of man—to the commands of rigid duty. ; Remember, Olivia, 'tis you that will send me unlamented to that bourn from which no traveller returns:"

Olivia scarcely staid to hear the conclusion of his tender and impassioned reproaches, but flew into the house with the utmost quickness. She hurried to her apartment, that she might, uninterrupted and unnoticed, give a loose to those tears she was unable to restrain. Lord Davenport was unhappy, and had told her she was the cause, and that her refusal of his vows would send him to the grave. She was inexpressibly distressed; but why could she not be allowed to live single? What right had he to condemn her? Had she encouraged any other to hope, he then might have thought himself authorized to complain: yet, even in that case, reproaches would have been unjust. — She stepped to the window of her apartment:
She

She saw Lord Davenport ride down the park; she looked pale; she sighed, and wished she might see him no more, because he interrupted her returning tranquillity; and she could not help thinking it was equally cruel and unjust in him to do so.

Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton now returned. They found Mrs. Vane unusually dejected: they saw she had been in tears; but, fearful of giving offence, they made no enquiry of the cause; yet, on being made acquainted with Lord Davenport's visit during their absence, they concluded something had passed between them that had given pain to their friend, and were desirous to know what it was.

The next day news was brought to the Grove that Lord Davenport was ill, and confined to his apartment. This confirmed their suspicions that Mrs. Vane had refused his Lordship's addresses. They lamented his disappointment, and silently

wished that something might happen to give a fortunate turn in his favour.

Mrs. Vane, on being made acquainted with her lover's indisposition, was much affected. Restless and uneasy, she secretly sent messengers to make enquiries after his situation; nor did the accounts she heard serve to make her easier. At length Mr. Beevor made his appearance at the Grove. Mr. Hamilton, impatient to hear tidings of his friend, enquired after him. Mr. Beevor replied, that Lord Davenport's complaint was of the mind more than the body; and therefore beyond the reach of medicine. In respect to his being cured, time, and not a physician, must effect it. — Mrs. Vane revived. She had the highest opinion of Mr. Beevor; and concluded, from his manner, that at present he apprehended no danger. Her cheerfulness returned; and from that moment she determined not to torment herself with imaginary fears. Conscious of not intending to make any one unhappy, she
thought,

thought, if they would be so, they ought to lay the blame on their perverse obstinacy. Argue, however, and resolve as she would, still she found the virtues and the sufferings of Lord Davenport had a powerful interest in her heart; and in company or solitude his once-loved image was ever present to her imagination. She endeavoured to keep up a resolute displeasure against him for the provoking revolution which the accidental interview in the garden had produced in her mind; but the next morning she was more inclined to be angry with herself.

C H A P. LIX.

What perhaps would be thought Weak and Superstitious.

A Very remarkable dream at this time made a most striking impression on the mind of Mrs. Vane, and gave a still greater turn to the scale, which was just beginning to preponderate in favour of her despairing lover.

She imagined herself in a garden, the sweets of which were beginning to lose their verdure, and the falling leaves foretold the speedy approach of Winter.— The melancholy appearance of drooping nature seemed grateful to her gloomy soul; and she felt a kind of pleasure at observing the various productions of the earth subject, like herself, to experience the vicissitudes

vicissitudes of time, and its inclement changes.

On looking up, she saw a most gigantic figure, with hasty strides, endeavouring to come near her. His countenance was bloated, and ugly to a degree; his body was deformed; his dress was dirty, mean, and ragged. She was terrified at the formidable appearance of this uncouth monster, and trembled when she beheld him throw himself at her feet.—“I am come,” he cried, with a harsh and unpleasant voice, “to reward the sincerity of your affection. My name is *Discontent*.—You have long cherished me in your bosom, and therefore, in return, I will take you to mine. Your dismissing my hated rival, Davenport, has made me your slave for ever.”

‘Heaven defend me!’ cried the frightened fair, ‘what will become of me? How came you to think that I could love you? Indeed, I never gave you reason to encourage such a hope. There-

fore leave me directly, I entreat you, Sir.'

"This coyness," cried the monster, rising, "is only a specimen of the same kind as is usually practised by your sex; but I am too well convinced of your regard to be easily repulsed."

At this moment he extended his monstrous arms to embrace her. Olivia flew from the spot, and ran with the utmost swiftness through some adjoining fields—she frequently, however, looked back, to see whether he had given over following her; but she saw he was making the utmost haste to overtake her, and that a grin of horrible revenge was visible in his detestable countenance.

Olivia continued to fly, till stopped by a frightful precipice. Against the bottom of this prodigious steep, which made her giddy to look down, the sea was beating with resistless fury. To complete the horror of the scene, the wreck of a ship, to which a number of poor wretches
were

were clinging, was dashing against the rock on which she stood. Their shrieks were re-echoed by her own at that moment her dreadful pursuer approached; and taking hold of her arm, with a rude gripe of violence, declared, he began to think she would have escaped him; but that he would avail himself of his power, and secure his prize. He had begun to drag her by force from the top of the precipice, when a well-known voice called out to him to desist, or yield up his carnisal life, as an atonement for his crime. The monster, who had neither courage nor justice to support his cause, was too much a coward to venture his life for one mortal, when he knew he had so many in his power. He therefore left his lovely prey upon the earth, on which she had fallen, and fled with the utmost precipitance.

Olivia, when her deliverer approached, found it no other than Lord Davenport, who had just escaped from the wreck, after being buffeted with the united rage of the

elements and waters; and on hearing her shrieks, had climbed the stupendous rock just in time to effect her deliverance.

He raised her gently from the earth, and entreated she would rest her head against his bosom, and in his arms endeavour to find shelter and repose from every remaining storm, with which he, much as herself, was weary with contending.

At that moment she thought the ghost of Mr. Vane glided past them, and, smiling with benign complacency, kept a few paces distance. He gracefully waved his hand to impose silence on them, and in feraphic accents, thus addressed the agitated pair :

“ Lose not the hour which indulgent Heaven has now thrown in your way, to complete your mortal pilgrimage with peace : and let no remembrance of me impede that union which Love and Heaven approve. In the land of spirits, which I now inhabit, our happiness is always encreased by the felicity of those

those whom we love. The ties, from the bliss of mortals, have no influence in those purer regions, where I now am placed. Let Davenport become the guardian of Olivia, and the now happy Vane will be the first to meet him on his arrival at the everlasting gate of eternity."—The spectre vanished, and Mrs. Vane awoke, with the horror of those imaginary scenes, through which the airy excursions of the ever-waking soul had so suddenly conveyed her.

Sleep, however, had fled with the vision, and the rising sun was never more welcome. She arose at the first appearance of its all-cheering rays, and was rejoiced to be released from the terrors which she found even in the arms of sleep, and which she could not help reflecting upon with surprise. She had been taught to despise and disregard every tendency to superstition; but there was something so very singular in the dream which that night had produced, that she hoped she should

not be inexcusable if she could not cease to remember it.

For some weeks Mrs. Vane continued to receive very unfavourable accounts of Lord Davenport's health. He had not attempted to renew his visits, but sunk into a melancholy despondency, from which the friendly endeavours of Mr. Beevor could not rouse him. Again he became a recluse, and, by keeping himself confined in his apartment, seemed to be desirous of shutting out the world. He told Mr. Beevor he could not leave the country, could not banish himself from the spot which contained all he loved; and that so long as Providence should choose to continue to him the burthen of life, he must live near Mrs. Vane. He made many resolutions of again revisiting the Grove, but they generally expired the moment they were formed. The last visit had been too fatal to his peace to be recollected, without the renewal of all those horrors that he had encountered at the agonizing moment
which

which had bereft him of every hope.— He heard that Mr. Goldwyn was in a few weeks expected at the Grove, and he determined to avail himself of that opportunity to solicit him to use his influence with Mrs. Vane in his behalf. If that expedient should likewise fail, he must patiently determine to reconcile himself with misery, and be wretched for life. Mr. Beevor was infinitely distressed on his Lordship's account, and offered to represent his wretched situation to Mr. Vane, but was refused. He then proposed sending to town for the little Olivia, in hopes that her presence would amuse his Lordship; but this proposal was likewise peremptorily declined. “What pleasure,” replied his Lordship, “could I feel from the caresses of a helpless infant, whom I shall soon leave to become an orphan? Or what would avail making any applications in my favour to one who, however willing to feel compassion for others, has a soul inaccessible to pity
for

for the sorrows of Davenport? Did she not fly from him at the very moment he knelt at her feet, in all the agonies of distress? And did she not even forbid him the soft consolation of every distant hope?"

A dreadful accident, however, soon produced a change in his favour, which all the persuasions of friendship or tenderness could not have accomplished.

C H A P. LX.

*An alarming Accident and its attendant
Consequences.*

ONE night, when Mrs. Vane had retired to her bed earlier, and more disconsolate than usual, by the carelessness of one of the servants, who had left a candle burning in one of the offices, which belonged to that wing of the house in which her apartments were situated, the building took fire. Olivia was just fallen into a sound sleep, and therefore heard none of the bustle which the first alarm occasioned; and every one of those who had been awakened by the noise, were too anxious to secure their own lives, to think of any one else. The alarm soon reached the village, which was not quite half a mile from the Grove.—Lord Davenport

venport started from his pillow on the first distant sound which he heard pronounce the cry of Fire. Forgetful of his own sorrows at that moment, he hurried on his cloaths, in order to fly to the assistance of those who were in distress. As soon as he got down stairs, he learnt that Vane-Grove was in flames, and, without immediate assistance, would be burnt to the ground. He staid to hear no more—rushed out of the house, and with the utmost speed flew to the relief of the object he adored. On arriving amongst the croud, who were endeavouring to extinguish the fire, his first enquiries were for Mrs. Vane. None could give any tidings of her. Mrs. Hamilton, who by this time had fled from her room, at a distant part of the house, cried out that her friend would be lost, as her apartment was in flames, and she had not been seen since the fire had been discovered. Lord Davenport, distracted, flew to her relief. The stair-case was already in part destroyed;

ed; he passed on without thinking of his own safety, and happily reached the apartment of Mrs. Vane, who was sitting half-drest on the side of the bed. She made no attempt to escape, being rendered unable to move a step farther by the terrifying ideas of her situation. The room was filled with smoke, and the cracking floor would in a few minutes of longer delay have fallen, and rendered all assistance vain. Lord Davenport snatched the almost fainting beauty to his arms, and resolutely carried her through some of the flames.—“Fear nothing,” he cried, as he claspt herto his bosom, “Davenport will perish or preserve Olivia.” His own feet and hands were terribly burnt; but Mrs. Vane was no otherwise hurt, than by those terrors occasioned by her fright:—she had fainted in the arms of her deliverer, and she was a long time in the air before they were able to discover any signs of life. The flames were soon happily got under, and no other
part

part of the building damaged but that in which the accident had happened, which was chiefly consumed. Mrs. Vane was carried into a part of the house that was not endangered. It was many hours before she recovered her senses sufficiently to recollect the whole of that tremendous scene which this alarming night had occasioned. People were appointed to watch the expiring flames, and prevent further mischief. In the mean time, Lord Davenport was obliged to send for his carriage, in order to return home with Mr. Beever, and get his feet and hands dressed; for the anguish he felt began to be insupportable.

We must here leave the readers to imagine what must be the grateful sensations of Mrs. Vane, when she reflected on the horrid death from which the generous humanity of Lord Davenport had rescued her, at the hazard of his own life; and when she heard of his sufferings on that account, her tears betrayed how much

much her heart was affected by the recital. She was impatient to thank her preserver, but was told it would be impossible for him to leave his apartment for some days. Tranquillity was again soon restored at the Grove, and the necessary workmen instantly employed to repair the damaged building. Mr. Goldwyn, and the elder Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton hurried to the Grove, on hearing the first tidings of the accident which had so nearly proved fatal to one who was inexpressibly dear to them; and on being informed of the situation Lord Davenport was in, from his generous exertions for Mrs. Vane's preservation, Mr. Goldwyn and the two Mr. Hamiltons agreed to pay the noble sufferer a visit; nor did they depart without being entreated by Mrs. Vane to tell him she lamented the miserable state to which his humanity had reduced him. Young Mr. Hamilton vowed they would not repeat a word of the message; but refer his lordship to herself,

self for the acknowledgements he was justly entitled to receive on this occasion.

The meeting between Lord Davertport and Mr. Goldwyn was particularly interesting. The paternal, the generous friendship of the one, and the grateful and heart-felt attachment of the other, though long and painfully interrupted by a train of disagreeable and unfortunate events, revived at this interview with increasing energy, and plainly discovered that, though it had been prevented taking a more active part in the busy drama of a life in which they had been separately engaged, it remained unabated by the influence which time is said to have on the minds of too many.

'Tis not to be doubted that the gentlemen found any unwillingness in entering warmly into the interest of Lord Davertport, respecting his attachment to Mrs. Vane. They agreed that she ought to reward him with her hand for the preservation of her life; but none of their
friendly

friendly offers could replace hope in the bosom from which it had fled, on the resolute manner in which Mrs. Vane had refused to accept his vows.

Upon their return to the Grove, Mrs. Vane was not long suffered to remain unsolicited in behalf of Lord Davenport: Mr. Goldwyn reminded her of his long-tryed affection, and exculpated him from all blame in marrying when his father insisted upon his instant obedience.

Mrs. Hamilton declared, she must have the heart of a Hyena to refuse such an extraordinary lover; whilst Augustus vowed it was impossible she could have formed such cruel intentions.

The gentle Emily, fearful of distressing her friend, said but little; but what she did venture to pronounce, was in favour of Lord Davenport. Thus beset, Mrs. Vane had nothing left her but retreat; and she took the first opportunity of stealing to her apartment, in order to give a full and candid examination to her own heart,

heart, which had for some days experienced a revolution that had given an alarm to its fair possessor, and rendered her very much inclined to think herself guilty of some degree of weakness. Yet, to make a second choice, and that too, of one to whom she had vowed never again to listen on the subject of love!—she could not think of it.—Lord Davenport had saved her life—she did not chuse to dwell on that thought, lest it should soften her too much.—What the result of all her determinations were, a very few pages will discover, with the important alteration they instantly produced in the minds of those most interested in the event.

C H A P. LXI.

An Important Interview, which all Real Lovers will approve; Prudes, Old Bachelors, and Discontented People condemn.

LORD Davenport, on his being informed by Mr. Beevor that he might now venture out with safety, accompanied by his watchful friend, arrived very unexpectedly at the Grove, just as the party already there had sat down to amuse themselves with a game of cards. His Lordship, with the assistance of Mr. Beevor's arm, with difficulty reached the drawing-room, and very agreeably surpris'd them by his entrance. Mrs. Vane trembled at seeing her lover, whose emaciated form convinced her that his sufferings, of which she had been told, had been far from imaginary: one hand and arm was obliged to

to be supported in a sling, having been very severely burnt in his exertions to save her from the flames; and she could not help sighing when she reflected on what he must have endured.

After tea the whole company, on various pretences, left the room, till none remained but the two lovers. Lord Davenport observed the good-natured design of his friends; but depressed with fears of a second positive denial, he was some minutes before he could muster up sufficient resolution to take advantage of the opportunity thrown in his way. At length, however, he ventured to enquire, whether she still continued resolute in confirming his former rigorous sentence, in condemning him to unceasing misery? If she did, he had only one consolation in view, that of being speedily released from his sufferings by death. Without hope, he wished not drag on a wretched life.

Mrs. Vane entreated he would not talk in that melancholy manner; said, he must think

think her not only divested of gratitude, but of every benevolent sentiment, to imagine she could reflect on the death of her preserver with indifference!

“If gratitude is all you have for that preserver,” cried his Lordship, with some little indignation, “the regret you feel would be soon lost in a total forgetfulness of the object, who has only given a momentary rise to it, and who had long been so unfortunate as to be cursed with your aversion.”

“My Lord,” replied Olivia, roused and wounded by this reproach, “what reason have you to suppose that you, of all others, should be singled out as an object of aversion? What proofs have I given?”

“Oh! a thousand,” interrupted his Lordship. “Can you forget how you robbed me of every hope—destroyed every prospect of delight? You can coldly reason, Madam—But I love.”

‘I only,’ replied the blushing Olivia, interrupting him in her turn, ‘remember,
VOL. III. I that

that to you I am indebted for my life; and in that reflection have been taught to wish the preservation of yours, which is far from being, as you unjustly believe, of no consequence to my happiness.

Let any one, for a moment, reflect on the situation of Lord Davenport—the transition was too sudden, from the lowest depth of despair, to be bid to hope. To be told he was not indifferent to Olivia was insupportable transport! He ventured to entreat she would tell him, whether what he heard was real, or only the delusions of his distempered fancy?

Mrs. Vane, fearful of the consequences that might arise from the emotions which she saw he had to encounter from this unexpected change in her sentiments; desired he would be more composed, and rely on her sincerity, when she assured him, that the voice which first taught her heart to acknowledge the influence of love, still retained its power to charm.

Lord

Lord Davenport, no longer able to contain his transports, eagerly threw himself on his knees before her, and poured forth the soft effusions of his enamoured soul. Olivia insisted on his being resealed, and condescend to hear only a few resolutions that she had made previous to the confession which he had stolen from her, sooner than she intended he should have done. His lordship was all obedience; and the lady proceeded.

“ Notwithstanding the partiality I have avowed is no more than your worth and constancy had some right to expect, I have had some difficulty to prevail with myself to think of another engagement; nor could any but yourself have conquered my repugnance to a second marriage. But I will not be hurried to the altar, till every respect has been paid to the memory of my departed Henry, to which his worth and tenderness have an undoubted claim. You must not be displeas'd if I cannot immediately bring

myself to think of him without regret, nay without tears. Indeed, my Lord, he was the best of men."

'I know it,' replied his Lordship, and revere the sorrow which convinces me of his merits. I too, my Olivia, will cease to remember him but as the friend to whom I was once sincerely attached. I will patiently wait for that hour in which, without reluctance, you can accompany me to the altar; and shall rely on your own generosity for not fixing it at a very distant period.'

"Let Lord Davenport remember," replied Mrs. Vane, "whenever that hour arrives, I will present him with an undivided heart; but I can never be prevailed upon to surrender my liberty without a promise of being permitted to live the greater part of every year in the still shades of life. I was not formed for the busy world; and I have imbibed a strange, and perhaps inexcusable aversion to those scenes,

scenes, which by far the greater part of my sex admire."

'Thou wert formed,' cried her enraptured lover, once more falling at her feet, 'to do honour to a court, or, with thy gentle, un aspiring virtues, to decorate and charm retreat. Cherish no fears, enchanting, timid trembler, sweet companion of my earliest years!—Whatever be your choice will be the choice of Davenport. To live with you I would this moment quit the gay, the envied scenes of fashionable life, and become a recluse from that world you dread to encounter.'

"No more, my Lord," interrupted Mrs. Vane; "I will never form a wish to have you forget the situation in which Providence has placed you. For me you must not lose the remembrance of that dignity which you are called upon to support. Though fond of retirement, I am far from thinking 'tis the province of virtue to confine itself to the sequestered vale: It is incumbent on the great to

shew the world they are so. Indulge me with seclusion whilst you, my Lord, take a more active part in the important business of society, which is assigned you."

' We will ever go together, my Olivia, ever from this blest moment support each other through life's rugged way;— with you I am all you wish to make me: without you a mere cypher! You are my guardian genius, whose smiling influence it is to animate the being you must form.'

Mr. Hamilton entered before Lord Davenport could rise from the feet of Olivia.—“ Oh! these artful, unconscionable women!” cried he, humorously; “ well, faith, your Lordship has more patience than ever fell to my lot. Had my good woman been as perverse in her freaks as this same niece of mine, I believe I should have deserted her a second time. Here, my Lord, take her hand, 'tis your undoubted right; and I am proud to say, I have some authority to
dispose

dispose of it ; and I will resolutely exert it in your favour."

Olivia smiled, and told her uncle he should not have reproached her so severely, without first being certain she deserved reproof. "Enquire of Lord Davenport," cried she, blushing, "if I have in this interview given him any just cause to complain. If he tells you so, I shall know better, the next time we meet, how to deal with such unreasonable intruders." Glad of so fair a pretence to escape, she hurried out of the room. It would be affectation should we here omit to acknowledge that Mrs. Vane felt herself at this moment the happiest of her sex. She had, in having acted generously, relieved her heart from a weight of obligation, and, in bidding her lover not despair, given to her own bosom the sweetest hope it had ever known.

Lord Davenport was too much elated to confine his transports entirely in silence. Every one of his friends were too much

interested in whatever concerned him, not to become partakers of his joy. Sir Robert and Lady Clifton were likewise soon made acquainted with the fortunate revolution that had taken place at the Grove. Lady Clifton sent a very humorous letter to congratulate her friend on the change which love had occasioned in her sentiments; vowing she never again would have faith enough to credit any resolutions made by one of her own sex, in respect to the disposal of their lovers. Never was a happier circle than at this time assembled at Vane-Grove;—it might with justice be called the Residence of Love and Friendship.

In a few weeks Mrs. Vane made a proposal to Lord Davenport of sending for the little Olivia, with whom she no longer scrupled to avow she was impatient to become acquainted; and 'tis not to be doubted but his Lordship took the earliest opportunity to avail himself of a request that served greatly to increase the satisfaction

faction he enjoyed; for he was not so much the lover as to forget, for one moment, that he was a parent.

The young Olivia was very unexpectedly accompanied to the Grove by her grandmother, who had, during the long and tedious absence of her son, sent for the little prattler; and was become so very fond of her charge, that on being informed by him of the prospect he had of being united to the fair one, for whom he had, through so many tedious years, languished to call his own, she determined on taking this opportunity to pay her a visit. So fair a pretence for becoming acquainted with one who had occasioned her son such unceasing regret, and given rise to a passion equally uncommon as it was unconquerable, wanted no excuse. Mrs. Vane was surprised; but she was delighted with the honour done her by the only surviving parent of her lover. Her charming namesake she soon found it impossible not to love; and she likewise felt

an equal propensity to let Lady Davenport become a sharer in her affection.

Lord Davenport very soon imparted to his mother the whole history of his attachment to Mrs. Vane, from the first of its commencement. She lifted up her hands in silent astonishment, and admired the wonder-working ways of Providence; who had, after so many difficulties, dispersed those clouds that had thrown a shade over the brightest prospects of her darling son. Charmed with the beauty, sweetness, and benevolence of her intended daughter, she ventured to solicit Mrs. Vane to shorten the time of his probation as much as her delicacy could allow; and she agreed to continue at the Grove till the happiness of those in whose felicity her own was rested should be accomplished.

CHAP.

C H A P. LXII.

Another Visit to the Altar of Hymen.

WHEN eighteen months had nearly elapsed from the death of Mr. Vane, Lord Davenport obtained permission to fix an early day for the completion of his wishes. Much as Mrs. Vane disliked the thoughts of a public wedding, on this occasion none of her friends would hear of being excluded.

Olivia was once more attended to the altar by Mr. and Mrs. Goldwyn, accompanied by Lady Davenport, Sir Robert and Lady Clifton, Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton, Augustus and his Emily, and Mr. and Mrs. Beevor. Never did Hymen wear a more smiling aspect than on the morning these nuptials were celebrated.

Love and Friendship attended the sacred rites of their old friend on this occasion; and a perfect reconciliation appeared once more to have taken place between the very long contending parties. Olivia was all composure; and the smiles of serenity, which the penetrating eye of her watchful lover discovered in the animated countenance, on which he fondly gazed, conveyed the most transporting delight to the grateful heart that was now arrived at the highest pitch of mortal happiness!

On their return from church Lord Davenport embraced his lovely bride.—“For ever blest,” he exclaimed, “be this sacred day, that has united me to my Olivia! Long may I be permitted to convince this angelic woman how dear, how inexpressibly dear she is to that heart which never could be taught to own another’s power.”

Vane-Grove was again become the scene of hospitable festivity. The world had not a blessing which this distinguished couple

couple now thought they did not possess. Whenever Lord Davenport looked at his Olivia, the gentle aspect of virtue, he concluded, had never before been attended by such softening modesty; her noble frankness, which unfolded the sensibility of a soul above disguise or dissimulation, and displayed the unceasing beauties of a mind enlarged by a good and useful education, made him more her captive than ever.

'Tis not to be supposed that Lady Davenport was inclined to think less favourably of her Lord. The sincerity of his love was now the foundation on which her hopes of happiness securely rested.

C H A P. LXIII.

The Conclusion.

WE cannot take leave of our readers without giving them a farther account of those characters that have taken an active and distinguished part through the whole of our history.

The Dowager Lady Davenport, on expressing a tender reluctance at being again obliged to submit to a separation from her son, was by Lord and Lady Davenport easily prevailed upon to reside with them the remaining part of her life. They attended her declining years with such affectionate tenderness, that she felt not the severity of those unavoidable infirmities with which old age is burthened. Her affection for her children increased as
life

life was drawing to its close ; and her fondness for their playful offspring was a constant source of amusement and delight. She lived to a good old age ; yet her survivors could not help regretting, that she left them too soon to lament the loss of one who had rendered herself not only dear to them by her affection, but by her virtues.

Sir Robert and Lady Clifton continued to live in the utmost harmony with each other. The strictest intimacy and friendship always prevailed between them and Lord and Lady Davenport. They soon took possession of their house, which they had built near the Grove ; and the two families generally settled their affairs so as to be in town together. This worthy couple, however, met with frequent interruptions to their peace, by the death of their children ; only two of them being permitted to live till they reached their twentieth year ; and even those two, they are apprehensive, will not survive them.

Mr.

Mr. and Mrs. Goldwyn lived to a very advanced age ; happy themselves, and beloved by all that knew them. By never forgetting they had been young, they were ever a welcome guest in whatever youthful parties chose to mix. When peevish age, from which even their nearest relatives are sometimes compelled to fly, sinks to the grave ; or when the iron heart of old age is so inclosed by fordidness as to deny entrance to every tender claim of nature or friendship, we see it fall without regret : by having outlived every generous sentiment, it likewise destroys all the endearing ties that bind others to soften its distresses, and, like fruit full ripe, loses its value before it drops upon its parent earth : but when we see it retain all the virtues of its youth, decorated with the wisdom of experienced knowledge, every feeling heart must regret the stroke which summons from earth the beings that best served us to reconcile us to its cares.

Mr.

Mr. Goldwyn spent a part of every year with his darling Olivia; and was often heard to declare, that the peace and serenity she enjoyed was a perpetual source of delight to his soul. The prosperity of his own virtuous family met with fewer interruptions than in this revolving scene mortals have reason to expect will fall to their share. And as they had been carefully taught not to expect uninterrupted happiness, whilst on earth, they met their allotted portion of human ills with pious resignation and virtuous fortitude.

Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton likewise continued for many years to pay frequent visits to their charming relation at the Grove. The uncle of Olivia purchased an estate as near her as he could; and became the useful and respectable country gentleman. On his immense fortune being discovered by the public, he was earnestly solicited by some gentlemen to offer himself a candidate for the borough of ****; but he resolutely declined it, declaring

declaring he had too much the spirit of a free-born Englishman to sacrifice either his principles or his time, in order to be flattered into disappointment by the attempt, or bribed out of his honesty if successful: said, that to be in favour with the great a man must conceal his own good qualities, or flatter their bad ones; and he would do neither.

Time he thought his greatest treasure; and though his fortune was continually increasing on the departure of every week, he considered himself as one who was growing poorer; and he wished that necessity might never compel any one more than it did him, to forfeit either that or their honesty to their ambition or necessity.

Augustus Hamilton, rendered by nature gay, by dissipation thoughtless, and by prosperity vain and unguarded, was for some years a careless, roving, but never an unkind husband. The gentle Emily was too soon convinced of his inconstancy, to find that felicity in the married

ried life which she had flattered herself enjoying with the dear object of her fond affection :—silently and patiently she submitted to this severest trial of the heart. She wept in secret for the deviation which her beloved Augustus made from prudence and affection ; but she relied on himself alone for a return to those virtues which his own heart she knew reproached him for having neglected. Time, aided by reflection, the amiable conduct of his Emily, and the interesting example of Lord Davenport, effected a reformation before that dangerous period arrived, when the loss of health, friends, and fortune rendered his peace and happiness irrecoverable.

Mr. and Mrs. Beavor were ever respectfully and tenderly attached to Lord and Lady Davenport, by whom they were equally beloved and esteemed ; and with them they long continued to spend the greatest part of their time, whenever their noble friends were in the country.

Lord

Lord and Lady Davenport lived many years a bright and shining example to the world. The happiness they derived from the practice of virtue, rendered it permanent and secure. They expected to meet with some trials, even in the midst of felicity, and by that means were guarded against the attacks they had to encounter.

Lady Davenport, unable to support the absence of her affectionate husband, generally accompanied him to London during the meetings of parliament; and very soon lost that timid reluctance which at first made her averse to entering into the bustling scenes of public life.

But it was neither in the power of necessity or custom, to render a life of dissipation necessary to her happiness. Amidst the alluring splendors of a court, she preferred the more calm delights of retirement; yet never murmured at leaving her favourite retreat to attend her Lord, when the welfare of his country demanded his attendance.

attendance. She continued to increase her active benevolence, by adding to the number of those persons she had before her second marriage so comfortably provided for. His Lordship assisted her in regulating her plans, and putting every thing in such nice order respecting her establishments; that, so far from finding any trouble, from superintending them, they only served to increase her satisfaction.

Mr. Maynard, at his death, left the whole of his immense fortune to his grand-daughter Olivia; and requested in his will, that Lord Davenport would reserve his own for the children which he had by his present Lady, of whom he became very fond, for the tender attention to the little darling his Fanny had left him.

Lord Davenport ever continued the best of husbands and of men. His fondness and unremitting attention to his amiable and beloved Olivia, ended not but
with.

with his life. When time had robbed her of those outward charms by which so many are alone enslaved, the fond lover was never lost in the forgetful husband. He was not more a captive to her youthful beauties in the beginning of life, than he was the admirer of her virtues at its peaceful and regretted conclusion.

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